MAID OF THE MOHAWK

FREDERICK A. RAY

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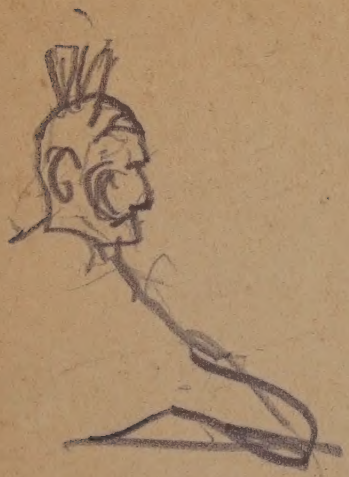

Maid of the Mohawk

Jeanne

Maid of the Mohawk

.. By ..

Frederick A. Ray

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There was a man who lived a simple life—A man of God. His advice I sought, his advice I heeded for it was good. He perused these unfinished chapters with pride and satisfaction. Did I hope to dedicate them to him while yet he lived? Alas! that is impossible now, for he is dead.

As a wreath upon his bier I dedicate this book to the MEMORY of my father.

Frederick A. Ray.

Herkimer, N. Y.

April 15th, 1906.

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MAID OF THE MOHAWK

CHAPTER I

THE VANHORNS

Born long years back of the beginning of the nineteenth century, which is itself now well advanced, I am reminded that my span of life is drawing toward its close, that I who was once young am now old, that it is but a matter of a little time when the silver pitcher will be broken, the slender cord of life be severed. It has long been my intention at some time while yet in possession of my faculties before the weakness of old age should come upon me, and at the time when my life seemed fullest and ripest, to indite a message to my children and my children's children as well as to all others who may care to read and know of the valiant sacrifices made by our people of the Mohawk at the time when that great shadow known as the Revolution passed over us. The proper time seems now at hand, for as I write my great-grandchild climbs upon my knee. As I look at him, I become aware that my days are full, that I will soon be gathered in, and so I hasten.

If blood be thicker than water, then why should it not afford me pleasure and give to me a pride of

country to write of those eventful times wherein my people so patriotically sacrificed much, and contributed liberally for the defense of home. As I go back through the halls of memory and open up the past, taking from it those persons, events, and facts which were such prominent factors in shaping results, I am glad to find that my people of the Mohawk did their duty well. In this story of love and war, I have no other intention than that of bringing out the parts played in that great drama by my own people, the Dutch of the Mohawk. For myself, if I may have performed any act of merit, I ask that it be credited not to me, but to them.

If this tale seems simple, simple in its incidents and more so in its words, I ask you to remember that its relator is a simple man who speaks in the language of three generations ago.

I, Henry VanHorn, who am telling this story, came from a line of VanHorns that have long been connected with the history of this country and of our fatherland. When that fearless old Peter Stuyvesant, the last of the Dutch governors of New Netherland, came over in 1647, there was with him a VanHorn, one Jacob, I believe, a Dutch Protestant from Flanders. He had taken part in many battles that were waged in his native land, and when religious oppression became such that he could no longer tolerate it, he and other refugees came over with Stuyvesant.

When the first of the Dutch governors had bought Manhattan Island, it was found to contain much more

area than was requisite for town purposes, and so the balance was sold as estates. After Peter Stuyvesant had ruled four years, he purchased a large tract of this land lying in the southeastern part of the island, and called it the Great Bouwerre.* Having acquired this, he looked on those of his countrymen for a suitable man in whom to invest the supervision of his estate. His glance fell on Jacob VanHorn, who since his stay here had acted as klopperman or rattle-watch, whose business it was to visit each house, bearing a lanthorn and shaking his rattle loudly all through the night, to warn the inhabitants and evil-doers that he was near at hand. Stuyvesant offered the place of supervisor to Jacob VanHorn if VanHorn would give up his Lutheran ideas and accept the church of Stuyvesant, the Reformed. This VanHorn refused to do, but after a long argument the governor decided to employ VanHorn notwithstanding the difference of religious opinion.

A large manor-house, a tavern, and other houses had already been built, one of these like unto the manor-house. In this house Jacob VanHorn lived, and over this settlement the first VanHorn ruled, answerable to no one but the governor himself. After the coming of the English and the overthrow of the Dutch government, and during the absence of Stuyvesant in Holland, my ancestor stayed on. When old Peter came back himself to live on his estate, so well pleased was he with the management of affairs during his absence

* Pronounced bowery.

that he gave Jacob VanHorn a block of land in the north part of his little province.

At this point let me relate a little incident connected with the giving of the land to VanHorn. Peter, on his return from the fatherland, brought with him a much-cherished pear tree. As the fruit was highly prized and the trees were very scarce, he thought it best to make a festival day, marked with ceremonies, the latter part of which should be the planting of the tree. He therefore declared a certain day to be one on which all of his people within the Bouwerre village should not work, but should come to the manor-house to partake of the good things and assist in the merry-making and ceremonies. Accordingly they assembled on this day, listened to a speech by Peter himself, and afterwards the tree was duly placed in the ground. Following this a repast was served. Peter thereupon dispensed presents to all his people, ranging in value from a silver tankard to the estate given Jacob VanHorn.

Upon his little estate Jacob VanHorn lived and died, and here was born to him a son whom he named Henry. This Henry was my grandfather, for whom I was named. He in turn after his father's death occupied these lands for his lifetime. To him also was born a son, whom he named Klaus. Klaus was given a son, and that son am I.

My father, being the youngest of a large family and not wishing to continue as his ancestors had done, decided at his marriage that he would fight the battle of life in other fields. On the day of his wedding my

grandfather had, after the ceremony in the Bouwerre church, presented him with some five hundred pounds, saying as he did so: "My son, it grieves me that you should desire to leave me in my old age, but I realize that I cannot always have you with me. This money I give you as a portion of your inheritance, and may it assist you in whatever you undertake."

After the ceremony and wedding feast, these two people, my father and mother, boarded a slow sailing sloop and came to Albany. From here, after purchasing two horses, they started west to meet the Mohawk at Schenectady. One horse they both rode; the cooking utensils, articles of clothing, and other things they had brought along were placed on the other. Their objective point was one of the small posts further up the Mohawk.

Of this journey my mother has often told me, and although they encountered many disagreeable experiences, among these being an attack by a panther which my father killed, she always spoke pleasantly of it, and even in a joyous manner. The only reason I can give for such an expression of enthusiasm over a tedious journey is that it was the happiness of bridalhood which overcame all adverse conditions. What woman does not look back with pleasure upon the days when she was a bride! If afterwards come poverty, privations, and disappointments, are not all these forgotten in the remembrance of those happy days of early married life?

The spring, with its gladness, its leafy greenness,

mingled with the carol of birds, was here, and as the happy couple followed along the river's bank, there opened to them at every turn beautiful views, landscapes whose newness and grandeur impressed them as a view of the promised land might have impressed the children of Israel. Through these beautiful scenes there flowed the more beautiful Mohawk, bordered on either side for a considerable portion of the way by steep and precipitous mountains whose rocky sides and timber-covered peaks were to them a revelation. In many places the mountains came nearly down to the water's edge, leaving only the road between them and the river.

For three days they followed the river's course, not hurrying, but taking in all the beauty of the wilderness, and each night finding rest in the home of some settler. On the third day, as the sun was beginning to cast long shadows over the tree tops on the mountains above them, they rounded a great bend in the river, and in the distance through the trees saw a clearing. At the south and to the left of the river were several settlers' cabins standing by the hillside. Riding up to the first of these they obtained permission to stay with the owner.

During the supper the host told his name and inquired that of my father, and his mission in the valley. He also told his visitors that this was the Canajoharie district, and that for a few miles above it was quite thickly settled. On being told that my father was looking for a place to settle, a place that would be on

the route of the Indians who came with their furs from the great woods of the North and from the Susquehanna valley at the south, on their way to Albany, the host replied that this was exactly the right location for one who wished to engage in the fur traffic, as nearly all the Indians passed here on their way down the river, both afoot and by bateau. The host added that he thought well of the prospect, and remarked that the red men would much prefer disposing of their furs here rather than make the longer journey.

Here my father and mother lived for a time, until finding that land further up the river, lying on an eminence that ran parallel and to the south of the river, could be purchased, my father decided to buy it, and erected a log cabin in which they lived for a time.

When my father's purpose became known, his business prospered, and he easily established permanent relations with those who wished to part with their furs. In the next few years the venture grew to large proportions and became remunerative. The furs he sold in Albany to traders who came up from New York, personally superintending the transportation of them either by boat or wagon, and bringing back supplies, such as flour, blankets, and articles that could be exchanged with the Indians.

Seated at the hearth one evening, in a little hostelry located near the quay in Albany, my father, as was his wont, became engaged in conversation with a stranger who had arrived that day by boat from New York—

a gentleman of benign countenance, whose every move and word bespoke dignity. In age the stranger appeared to be perhaps a little past fifty. Although his conversation was tinctured with nautical terms suggesting that he had been a seaman, his soft and almost perfect speech was not of the sort used by men of that vocation. During the conversation the stranger mentioned that he was intending a trip up the Mohawk. As my father was well impressed with the stranger's manner, he proposed that they make the trip in company, to which the stranger readily agreed. The stranger gave his name as Paul Manning, explaining that he followed the trade of a carpenter, and had with him a chest of tools that he wished to take along. Of course, his listener was surprised that a carpenter should care to settle among our people, since most buildings were made by the owners themselves, as their crude construction plainly showed. He was more surprised that the stranger did not seem at all particular as to where he went, did not seem to have in view any particular objective point on the river. However, good manners forbade close questioning, and the stranger came home with my parents and lived with them for a time. Being well supplied with money, he later purchased a few acres below and erected for himself a house, in which he lived the remainder of his life.

It was in this manner that Paul Manning came among us, came to live and die. In after years he was much shunned and maligned because of derogatory rumors.

In the end, he proved his worth. His gentle disposition, kindly nature, and loving manners toward those who injured him endeared him to the few who knew him best. In after years, I counted myself one of that number, and his strong personality and manliness of nature had much to do with shaping my life.

CHAPTER II

A STEPFATHER WITH A SON

A FEW years came and went, bringing with them peace and a bountiful sort of prosperity. These years had witnessed the building of a larger and more commodious house, the house in which I now reside. At last my parents thought to pay a visit to their former home and friends. Of their trip my mother has often spoken, and of the dark foreboding thoughts and unpleasant fancies that possessed her. These were in such contrast to the happy experiences of that other time when they had come over this same route, that she had remarked to my father concerning her gloomy reflections. He, manlike, had tried to laugh away her dark prophecies, but she persisted in believing that disappointment and some dire calamity awaited her.

After paying friends and relatives a visit, they were preparing for the return trip, when a circumstance occurred to change their plans and, as the future showed, the entire tenor of their lives.

The time was at, or rather a few months past, the breaking out here in the Colonies of the struggle between the French and English, which had been transplanted from the Old World. Word had been received of the coming of an intrepid commander, General

Braddock, who was to take charge of military affairs, and who, it was said, would "sweep the French off the continent." A regiment of Provincials was being raised in New York to go south and join this commander, and with him make the expedition against the French in the West.

Feeling the blood of those VanHorns who had fought at Flanders coursing through his veins, my parent became possessed with a desire to join this regiment. In spite of the tears and entreaties of my mother, and the admonitions of my grandfather, stanch Dutchman that he was, "to let the English fight their own wars," my father enlisted, and as his regiment marched away, he waved a last adieu to the aged father and the wife of his youth who nevermore saw him.

There was with the regiment a man who had for years been in the employ of the British Land Agent's office in New York, by name James Hastings, an English-born young man who had married a wife from among the people of his adopted country. Recently the wife had died at the birth of a son. Unconsolable at his loss, the young man had found in an old friend of his wife's family one in whose charge he left the infant son, and at the formation of the regiment mentioned had been of the first to join. As is natural when men are thrown together, congenial spirits are attracted toward each other, hence my father and James Hastings became fast friends.

For me here to describe in detail that tedious march through the dense wilderness would be a waste of time

and space. Many times James Hastings has since related to me details of the trials and hardships that they encountered and were forced to endure.

But let me pass over the scenes of preparation, nor censure the gallant commander for his entirely wrong and circuitous route; his utter disregard of those who warned him of the wily ways of savages to whose methods he was unused; the disdain and contempt with which he rebuked the young colonel who made a personal appeal to him, counseling discretion. Sufficient is it for me to relate that as the objective, Fort Duquesne, was nearly reached, the sound of frightful yells, accompanied by a tremendous discharge of musketry, suddenly burst upon them as they were passing through a natural defile that lay in their route. It is unnecessary for me to make mention of the conduct of that brave colonel whose name, twenty-five years later, was on every lip. It was here that my father laid down his life, and he who attended him in his last moments was the new-found friend, James Hastings.

In course of time, the retreating army reached Philadelphia, where James Hastings was stricken with fever, lying ill for months, and being thereby unable to carry to my mother the news of her husband's death, as he had been directed.

During the intervening months from winter until fall, my mother was not especially alarmed at the absence of my father. True, he had expected to return ere this, but she reasoned that his regiment was detained by unexpected circumstances. Surely, under a

commander whose generalship could not be questioned, no harm could have befallen her husband. During these months she remained with her friends; she had little opportunity to worry, as my advent into the world was at this time, and my first months were filled with a succession of sundry ills and childhood ailments that so absorbed her sympathies and attention that periods of worriment concerning my father could not be of great length. As the winter months were approaching, she returned home, accompanied by her brother, who was to stay until my father's return.

As the harbingers of spring returned, there came with them to the valley the bearer of a message, a message that as the winter waned my mother had come to expect. Prolonged absence with no word of cheer had aroused and strengthened her fears, which were now confirmed. I need not tell you the name of the messenger, who, on finding that my mother had left her friends in New York, followed on to do his duty to a beloved friend and to carry out his last request.

This fellow-soldier was invited to remain for a time, as he was still weak from the fever that had delayed him. He stayed through the summer and well into the following fall, and did not leave then without asking permission to again return. This request was granted, and, on his return some few months later, he and my mother were quietly married by the Dutch minister at the Sand Hill church.

Could I have had the privilege of choosing the man who was to take my father's place and to act as my

guardian, I could have made no wiser choice than did my mother, when in the solitude and bitterness of widowhood she accepted the hand of James Hastings. In later years differences of opinion widely separated us, but my reverence of his memory is with me yet.

Besides the great chest of books and charts that he brought with him, there came also, as a matter of course, his son, Gilbert, the infant already mentioned. What were my first impressions of this boy who was to be my brother, I do not now remember, but an occurrence, away back in childhood, is still fresh in my memory. Gilbert's father had been to Albany, and, as always, had purchased some trifling toys. Carefully selected they were, and more carefully divided between Gilbert and myself. What they were, I do not remember, but Gilbert, not being content with his own, felt that he had a perfect right to usurp ownership of mine.

This proceeding brought forth loud bawlings on my part and angry exclamations on his. His father, acting as mediator, promptly returned to me my share of the playthings and punished his son. The part of this incident that pleased me most then, in my recollection, was the joy I felt at witnessing his chastisement. This phase of the character of the boy who was to be my brother furnished reasons for many quarrels and differences between us. As time soon enough, aye, too soon, brought us past the scenes of childhood's petty animosities and into early manhood, we became separated in a still greater degree as will be hereafter re-

lated. And yet, on my mother's account, I treated him as a brother, for was he not the son of the husband of her choice?

In spite of all Gilbert's misdoings, and whatever befell him later, his misfortunes can be traced to no other source, to none else, than to himself.

CHAPTER III

CHILDHOOD

At the time when I was some nine years of age there came into our locality another family to be added to the fast-coming influx of settlers in the community. Pierre Mortier was his name. A Frenchman, whose family consisted of a wife and daughter.

In our valley it was a rule well-followed that each knew his neighbor's affairs, pecuniary and social. If one did not know, he felt it not only to be his prerogative, but his duty to inquire. This being always followed, few days had passed before all knew the latest comer's name, that he possessed a fair portion of wealth, and that he was not located among us to clear and till land, neither expected he to engage in any traffic. On the contrary, he had come in search of that essential, health. A serious lung trouble had long since threatened him, and the climate of Manhattan being conducive to the growth of the disease, he had come to our valley in the hope of recuperating his lost vitality. Alas, however, God disposes in all these things, and our new habitant was not suffered to be among us long.

We had so few in our immediate community, although it was larger than any along the river west of Schenec-

tady, that it was with deep regret that we witnessed the departure of any of our neighbors, and we feared that the bereaved family of the Frenchman would leave us and return to their former home, but when the widow decided to remain, her decision caused such an amount of pleasant comment as to fix the event in my boyish mind.

However, I cannot remember when I first saw this daughter—Jeanne. This carries me back past my recollection of specific events or occasions. I do, though, remember the day this little miss first came, accompanied by her mother, to our home, to be taught of my stepfather.

James Hastings had brought, besides the chest of books and charts mentioned, a good fund of knowledge that was imparted by him to Gilbert and me daily. He had decided, although our surroundings did not require or warrant much education, that we should be different from the ordinary settlers' children in the matter of knowledge. He, himself, had been taught through his boyhood years by his father, a Presbyterian minister who had taken great pains in the instruction of his son. After two years at Oxford, his father's funds running low, he had accepted the position in America at the British Land Agent's office, as I have told of.

Jeanne's mother, who, since her husband's death, had been named by common consent and was now known as the "Madame," had learned of his versatility, and had previously requested that her daughter be taught

along with Gilbert and myself. I recollect now how this daughter appeared to me that day, with her curly flaxen hair, her dimpled cheeks, and deep blue eyes. I recollect that she wore a little blue frock, the material of which contrasted so strangely with the gray homespun that I had seen always before, that I promptly went over to her and felt the texture of this new and strange garment. Although somewhat shy, she did not seem to mind the curious impudence of this stout Dutch boy who had thus inspected her garments; but when Gilbert moved toward her in his gliding, easy way, she showed considerable aversion to him, and when he came closer and would probably have inspected her as I had, she shrank behind her mother. Although this seeming preference for me did not furnish my youthful mind with much satisfaction outside of gratifying my curiosity, yet now I find considerable pleasure in the remembrance of this incident.

I am sure I had seen girls previous to this, but if such had been the case, I do not remember them, and this girl was to me a thing of beauty such as I had no conception of. My mother had often spoken to me of angels, and had I not heard James Hastings read of them from the Holy Book, and do you wonder then, that in my slumbers that night I witnessed the assembling of a great host of angels, and all were the same, and were of the profile of my new friend?

Each day, for a goodly part of the year, she came for this instruction. Her mother lived only a short distance below, and in winter, when the snow was deep

on the ground, I often went for her, and taking her hand saw her safely through the drifts, both coming and on the return trip. Occasionally, bleak and harsh storms of snow came down upon us. Storms that made it impossible for man or beast to go forth, and then it was that my thoughts were gloomy and my mind filled with anxious inquiries as to the probable length of the storm. After the quieting of the elements, I could hardly contain myself while the slaves were breaking out the road, and as soon as it was passable, I again went after Jeanne.

One pleasant day in the winter, I think the second one after she first came to our house for instructions, and having grown into a sturdy lad, I was passing Paul Manning's home, it lying between the Madame's and our place, on my way to escort Jeanne back, when I discovered Paul standing outside and beckoning me toward him. He said cheerily: "Hello, young Dutchman, where are you going?"

"After Jeanne," I said.

"Would you like a conveyance on which she could ride?"

My eyes kindled. What could he mean? "Oh, yes," I finally replied.

"Well, come in the house," and leading the way, he went inside, I following.

To my surprise there on the floor rested a sled, not of the most beautiful curves, I will admit, but the red paint with which it was adorned covered all defects.

"Trim and natty, isn't she?" said Paul.

"Oh, Paul!" I cried (everybody called him Paul, and he had requested me to do the same), "is it for me?"

"Yes, for you. Now run and bring Jeanne on it."

So, thanking him, and with as light a heart as ever boy had, I hurried after her, not so happy that the sled was mine, but that it would contribute to her convenience and pleasure.

Gilbert, who had never seemed to question my privilege of acting as Jeanne's escort, much less tried to usurp it, had, at seeing us enjoy so thoroughly the benefit of Paul's gift, awakened to the fact that I was in Jeanne's favor, and I surmised he attributed it to the medium of the sled.

One bright afternoon we were preparing to descend again the slope toward Jeanne's home. The road had been blocked for some days by blowing snow and through it I had trudged with her, but now the storm had lifted, the path was again in condition, glistening in the sunlight, and I, with exultant mind, was about to place the sled for the descent when Gilbert appeared upon the scene.

In his usual defiant way, he requested that he be allowed the pleasure of making the descent with Jeanne. A glance at the path settled it. I refused to grant what he asked. Surely I had not drawn my charge through storm and drift to be thus thrust aside. After a considerable argument he took hold of the rawhide thong by which the sled was drawn. I immediately jerked it from his hand, and with such force as to send

him headlong into a drift beyond the path. In a moment he was up and at me. "You impudent Dutchman!" he cried, and with that gave me a blow that sent me sprawling into the same drift from which he had arisen.

The attack was entirely a surprise to me. Many times we had quarreled over trivial matters, the result of which had been his domination, but now my objecting to this had prompted him to open battle. Jeanne screamed on seeing me thus stricken. Before I had hardly considered what course to pursue, or had risen from the snow, the voice of Gilbert's father was heard calling him back to the house. So mandatory was that voice that he immediately obeyed, while I, with cut and swollen lip, and with Jeanne behind me on the sled, proceeded toward her home. Gilbert did not again that winter try to supplant me in my duty as Jeanne's escort.

I mention these facts not that you may have a despicable opinion of him whom I have mentioned, but recalling the things I have told, you may best understand something of the character and disposition of the boy who was later to oppose me in matters more serious than this one. I now, for the first time, considered him as opposed to my interest so far as Jeanne was concerned. The word *rival*, or its meaning, was years ahead of me then, but the purport of it all struck me that, as regarding her, he was my determined opponent. I cared not for the blow he had given me. I scarce gave my swollen mouth and bleeding lip a thought. These did not matter. By the intervention of his

father I had gained the now undisputed pleasure over which the controversy started; but I counted the thought regarding the future. What would he do on recurring similar occasions? Would he persist in his efforts to oust me as Jeanne's serving slave? Would there come a time when he might supplant me? I was too young to worry over events that were years ahead of me, and the dread I felt did not long hold me. Nevertheless it left with me its impression and made me more guarded of my interests in the future.

In the summer much of our time was spent together in long rambles down the river, that were made with no particular object in view; occasionally a fishing trip with Paul Manning, or an expedition through the woods in search of flowers in their season; and when fall came we went over the same route looking for nuts that had escaped the vigilant eyes of the squirrels. These trips did much for us in the way of increasing our knowledge of nature, for in most of our rambles we were accompanied by Paul Manning, whose prodigious fund of information regarding nature and the world at large was always forthcoming, and told in a way that was both interesting and instructive. Gilbert, too, generally was with us, that is, if he knew our intent, and this he generally did by watching our movements. I never objected to his going once he was started, even after the quarrel over the sled, yet no invitation was given him by myself.

A few years quickly brought us to an age where we were more comprehensive of our position, and then

arose between Gilbert and myself a strife as to who could best serve Jeanne; who could bring her the choicest flowers from the woods; who could most assist her with her lessons; who could be her most chivalrous and gallant escort-defender as we sometimes walked home with her and her mother, when they had come to our home and remained till nightfall. Never was lady more carefully served and her whispered wish obeyed.

I must have been about twelve years of age when Paul Manning came to our house one day, and, calling mother aside, they held a short conversation. Immediately Paul departed down the river, and on his return a few days later I was again made the recipient of a present from him—a rifle. Most boys of my age in the valley had guns, and Paul said that it was time for me to be trained as to its use.

"Don't be afraid of it," he said; "I will instruct you how to use it, and some day it may be of service to you."

Each day he and I practiced, and in a short time I could shoot as well as he. This gun made me feel more sure of myself, putting into my head many notions that should not have been there for years; the principal one was the idea of independence or emancipation from childhood, for I argued that a boy old enough and large enough to have a gun was able to represent his own interests in all cases.

On a beautiful summer day Jeanne, Gilbert and myself had wandered out into the great stretch of woods to the south in search of flowers. As always, since

owning it, I carried my present, the gun. We had roamed far back from the settlement, had been gone perhaps a couple of hours. Jeanne was a little to the front, whither she had run past us to pick a flower just discovered; Gilbert was between her and myself. He was also leaning over to pick flowers, when suddenly there arose overhead a horrible scream, followed by another. I scarce dared to lift my eyes in the direction whence came this awful yell, but as I did so, I beheld a panther springing from the top of a young oak, some ten yards from Jeanne, and directly at her. She raised her face and saw what threatened. For a moment I was helpless and then thought of my rifle. Quickly bringing it to the shoulder-level, I fired, and, as the smoke cleared away, there lay the body of the panther only two paces from Jeanne, spitting and clawing frantically in the throes of death. As for Jeanne, she had fainted. Quickly going to her and observing that she was unharmed, I was about to raise her, when Gilbert appeared from behind a near-by tree, trembling with fear.

"Come, Gilbert, assist me," I said. My voice seemed to assure him, for his ashen face resumed its natural color, and together we succeeded in bringing our little friend from the faint. No more flower-gathering was in order that day. Proceeding home, we told of our experiences, all talking in eagerness and at once. As we reached the part of the story pertaining to the killing of the panther, Gilbert stoutly maintained that he grasped the rifle from my hand and himself shot the

beast. In this he was partially corroborated by Jeanne, who, having fainted at the minute of the panther's death, did not and could not know exactly what had happened. After Gilbert's version had been told, I claimed the honor of firing the shot that killed, and asserted that, under the circumstances, Jeanne could not know who did it.

James Hastings readily believed that Gilbert was the valiant one, and that evening wandered down to Paul Manning's and related to him the story.

"Likely," said Paul, "that Gilbert shot a panther springing in mid-air; why, he never fired a gun in his life." This remark nearly cost him my stepfather's friendship.

As to which story my mother believed, I do not know, but when I told her the story afterwards, and in secret, her only comment was, "Never mind, it was well done anyway."

Gilbert, for this supposed act that showed quickness of aim and nothing more, was, by those who came to our home, made quite a lion of, while I was forced to bear a falsehood, for none excepting Paul Manning believed me. These things rankled in my heart, and I was determined to show that I did have courage in a way that left no chance for dispute. An opportunity presented itself a few months later for me to prove that, although young, I still had courage. Although I had been particularly cautioned not to go or take Jeanne far back from the clearings, yet one day in the fall, as she and I were out in search of nuts, I forgot this, and to my

discomfiture found that we were some distance from home. We had wandered back so far that the slope toward the river was indiscernible, and the land where we were was nearly level. I marked the difference, but never for a moment doubted my ability to find the way home. Starting out we traversed quite a distance, far enough, I reasoned, to be out of the clearing, when on closer observation I found that we were nearly at the place from where we had previously started. This I knew by a certain large oak that I had before noticed. I did not despair at this, and the proposition of being lost did not present itself to me as yet. Again we started, altering the direction quite considerably, with the same result as before. Darkness had begun falling and my serenity had nearly left me, and I fear that I showed the concern I felt plainly, for Jeanne looked at me and at once began crying. Not a word had I spoken about being lost, but her perception had fathomed my thoughts, and, as I realized this, I wanted to cry also, but did not.

Again we started and had gone some little distance, while there yet remained in front and on all sides the impenetrable blackness of the forest. Was ever I frightened, it was then. What if some wild beasts, such as panthers or wolves, should attack us! I knew full well that they roamed in this locality. So, on I mused, until my limbs trembled and my teeth clattered against one another. But as my fright finally ceased I looked about, and finding some small hemlock trees that grew close together, I requested Jeanne to come with me to

their shelter. I felt that further wandering was useless, and that waiting would be wiser; for our absence would surely be noted and searching parties sent out.

I gathered together some leaves and bade Jeanne lie down on them. Notwithstanding that she was supperless, and that sobs at first shook her frame, she at my assurance that help would come for us, ceased to talk or stir and was soon sleeping soundly. I criticised myself severely for bringing her so far from home, and my greatest worriment was that her mother, after this experience, would hardly allow her to go with me as she had in the past. This, however, was a secondary consideration, for feeling the responsibility of my position, gun in hand, I stood beside my sleeping charge and kept vigil.

My conjecture as to the searching parties was right. Night was beginning to fall when, as Jeanne had not returned, the Madame had come to our home for her. My mother could only say that she and I were away, and that our return at once was hoped for. Her manner was reassuring, but her voice had in a tremulo that added to the concern of the Madame, who, becoming hysterical, vowed to my mother that her son was an unruly Dutch brat and merited chastisement.

Billy, the colored slave that my father had purchased before his death, who, with his wife and son Punk, lived in the cabin at the back of the house, was dispatched to Paul Manning's at once for help. Paul hastily made ready to join in the search, bidding Billy go

across the river and notify Peter Wormuth, his son Matthew, and his men to come also, and at once.

It so happened that Paul Manning had quite an acquaintance with the Indians at the Upper Castle, and especially with Joseph Brant, chief of the tribe, and it so happened this day that Brant had been down the river and, returning, had visited Paul. He was about to continue the journey homeward when Billy arrived and breathlessly told of our absence. Brant listened to Paul's order that the Wormuths be notified and then inquired, "Am I not to be invited to join in the search for the son of my old friend, Klaus VanHorn?"

Together Paul and Brant, joined by my stepfather, started out, while Billy had meanwhile aroused Peter Wormuth, who came on with his son Matthew and two slaves. These two parties joined forces soon after starting.

The stars of the constellation Leo were well toward the point that marked the hour of midnight, when the sound of a gun being fired aroused me. During this time I had stood gun in hand, scarcely daring to change position. The awful silence was broken occasionally by the snapping of a twig or the hooting of an owl. At each sound my frame shook, but I could not do otherwise than bear what I was responsible for. I knew the meaning of the shot I had heard, and at its sound I instinctively raised my own gun to discharge it as an answering signal. Horrors! The dew had so dampened the priming as to make the discharge impossible. Truly, the fates were against us. I hallooed as loudly

as possible, thinking I might be heard by the would-be rescuers. At the first shout Jeanne awoke and, being alarmed at my scream, cried out. Frightened at this beyond reason, I yelled louder than before. This bedlam of noise surely would have frightened away any four-footed beasts prowling near us. The report of another gun silenced us momentarily. Again it sounded, and again. So on, the report of guns reached us for some time. Finally they grew less in volume. Surely, the party were going from us. Now nothing remained but to pass the night here. Jeanne quieted and again slept. I resumed my place of watching and remained so throughout the night.

Were ever gray streaks on the horizon more welcome? Did ever the first notes of waking birds sound on more recipient ears, and did ever a prisoner express more delight on being released? I trow not. The sun's appearance returned to me my instinct of direction, and we easily found our way home. Was there happiness in two homes? Was there well-deserved censure in one of them for me? Truly there was, but the censure was of short duration.

We reached home long in advance of the rescuers, who searched until nearly noon ere they returned in despair, to find us already home. As the time was near the noon hour, and the searchers, as well as the rescued, were fatigued and famished, my mother had prepared a dinner in which all, including Jeanne and her mother, participated.

In passing, let me mention a fact pertaining to this

meal that served but to illustrate the irony of fate. Joseph Brant kept up a conversation with the gallant young Matthew Wormuth, who was seated by his side. Could I have lifted the veil that hid the future, or rolled the scroll of coming events backwards, I could have beheld this same young man in the actions to take place at Cherry Valley ten years later, and could have known that he was to be slain by the order of this same noble warrior Indian chief. And the old father, who beamed on his son, who looked happy, as a listener to the fluency of his language—I might have heard him exclaim, "Brant, cruel, cruel Brant!" But this was of the scenes and times that were to follow, of which then we knew naught.

During this night certain reassuring thoughts had come to my mind, and they obviated to a degree my sufferings and fears. They were that I should not now be considered the inferior of Gilbert in bravery. Exposed as we had been to the beasts of the forests, myself the guardian of Jeanne, the importance of my position came to me, and had it not been for the great fear I felt I should have been delighted at the opportunity to vindicate myself.

At the dinner many questions were asked me of our experiences, and in the end I was voted quite a hero. At the conclusion, Paul Manning retold the story of that former experience wherein I had killed the panther, and none disputed the authenticity of his statement. Gilbert glowered on me with a look of hatred and left the table at once.

CHAPTER IV

AN ADVERSE REPORT CONCERNING PAUL

About this time of my young manhood a moving contingent came up the river, its owner intent on the upper valley, near the German Flatts, as a place of location. He stopped for the night at the home of one McDougall, whose place was about one mile above us.

It so occurred that Paul Manning had been assisting in the work of barn repairing that McDougall had on. It was here he and the stranger met. It seemed that in former days they had known one another, had been boys together. Their greetings were genial, but it was remarked that Paul did not seem to greatly relish the renewal of their former acquaintance.

After visiting with his old-time friend a few moments, Paul departed. As his manner was always retiring, it was not considered strange by the McDougalls that he did not spend more time conversing with his old-time friend. Had he stayed longer, the future might have been more kind to him, for the stranger, thinking that Paul was unsociable, that he should have remained longer while they chatted over events of past times, was incensed at the seeming breach of courtesy, and after Paul's departure exercised his ungallant spirit by relating some of Paul's past as follows:

They were raised in the same town, it seemed, near

Boston. After the passing of their early days Paul had secured a position on the clerical force in the office of a British marine company at Boston. Later the stranger had heard that Paul had married, and still later, that, leaving his wife behind, he had taken to the sea as a means of livelihood. A few years after this, the stranger recalled that while in Boston one day he had fallen in with a ne'er-do-well of a sailor, who had told him a strange tale concerning Paul. It was to the effect that while cruising in the Southern seas, Paul, Captain Kidd-like, had turned pirate. At least he had on his return paid his crew an extra allowance and had been spied upon later by one of his crew in London, who observed him in a banking house exchanging Spanish doubloons for notes. This sailor had met the skipper of Paul's crew, but he steadfastly refused to discuss the subject further than saying, " We were well paid."

Since then none of his friends knew of Paul's whereabouts. Concerning his wife, little was known. Her father, an Englishman, had returned years since to his native land, and she may, or may not, have gone with him. Paul's former friend, the settler, in telling this strange story, reasoned that from his information, all this must be true.

Strange tale, indeed, yet the ever-ready gossiping tongues of these plain people, who, having little with which to content themselves, so far as news went, readily told and retold this story, and found many believers as well as listeners.

Paul Manning's manner of living, his desire for solitude, his evasiveness, coupled with the fact that he worked but little at what it pleased him to call his trade, idling away time, as they thought, with his books, and that he was always well supplied with money, only served to strengthen the arguments against him and contributed much toward the completeness of the tale. Besides, he was known to be friendly with the Indians at the Upper Castle, and especially so with the chief, Joseph Brant. Together they made trips down the river, and it was thought that Paul was taken in by them in their mystic incantations and orgies as practiced by the Lenni Lenape. When it became known that Paul had, or was said to have been a pirate, I doubt if but few of our people realized the meaning. To many it was the same as though it had been said he was uncanny, or a conjurer of mystic and forbidden things. 'Twere an easy thing for a man to be called uncanny in those days, for the hobgoblins were a fact, and ghosts had been seen by nearly everyone.

Paul had always been considered a trifle queer, but now nearly all openly asserted that he was to be avoided. In fact, the superstitious now lay all their misfortunes at his door. Even though the former story were true, were there any facts in it that would warrant the pain to which Paul was subjected?

For some time these rumors disturbed the equilibrium of our pensive country life. However, Paul retained the friendship of his two most prized friends; I refer to Jeanne and myself. Through his malignment, we

two were his stanchest, shall I say *only*, defenders? Yes, 'tis true. With haughtiness and a most noble contempt toward his maligners he bore himself.

Although the blacksmith of our locality had announced that his only cow had died of a strange disease, "her eyes fairly bulging from her head," he said, as he related the details pertaining to the death of the cow, and indignation was widespread among the blacksmith's friends; and although the failure of the buckwheat crop that year, was laid at Paul's door, I was hardly prepared for what happened, following close on the death of the blacksmith's cow.

Paul Manning was a great admirer of the plots and tragedies of William Shakespeare and of the blind poet, Milton; especially did he admire the latter, for, like himself, he said, "Each had a thorn in his side, an ever reminder of his frailties." Ofttimes would he pace about his kitchen, loudly reciting the more intense and expressive phrases of his best-loved poets, phrases that I think best suited his lonely moods.

While in the midst of one of these verse-reciting periods, while wildly gesticulating and vehemently pronouncing the lines, he was observed by a belated hunting party, the members of which, returning at night from a deer hunt that had led them far away, observed him through the window thus engaged. Not knowing what he was doing, it was easy for them to believe that they had seen him in the midst of his wizard incantations, calling down wrath upon them, his neighbors; to believe that he it was who, by these methods,

was responsible for the blacksmith's loss, the crop failure and other strokes of bad luck that had visited them.

Knowing all this, I little expected that their anger would overcome their judgment, as it did one night in the fall following the spring in which the story was first told, when I was awakened a little past the hour of midnight by the conglomeration of discordant voices.

I groped to the window, raised it, and by the light of several pitch pine torches they carried, beheld some twenty men lining the road in front of Paul's home, all hallooing and stamping, cheering and jostling.

Hurriedly dressing, and seizing my rifle as I passed down through the kitchen, I started for the scene of commotion. As I drew near, I heard plainly the cries from those present.

"Down to hell mit de birate visard!" "Hang him mit a tree!" "Purn hees roof over hees head!" "Come oudt, Baul, you birate reptile!"

At once I understood. Excited beyond reason by repeated and exaggerated reports, these people, at first credulous, had, as the stories multiplied, become more receptive and finally the superstition of their time had set to work their slow anger, and now thoroughly enraged, they were to resent their supposed injuries by taking the life of the strange hermit-like neighbor, at whose door they lay all their troubles and vicissitudes. They were doing a Mohawk-like war-dance up and down in front of Paul's house, calling out to him as I have mentioned.

Realizing that soon their anger would break bounds

and that they would assault the house, almost unnoticed I passed through their midst, mounted the porch of the house, and said loudly:

"Fools, back to your homes!"

I was answered by a shout of derision as they observed me, and a stone flew past me and struck the door with a loud thud. Raising my rifle, excitedly, I cried, as I fumbled the flint lock as a warning:

"I will shoot the first man who disobeys me. All turn faces toward the river."

It was a critical moment with me. What would have happened had they not obeyed, I cannot say. As it was, all turned faces as I commanded.

"March quickly!" I yelled, anxious to follow up my apparent first success.

Their leader—no, I will call no names, for I knew them all and their posterity; the generation of the time I am writing had best not know the sins of their fathers—raised the first foot to advance, and every angry Mohawk settler present marched away.

The door opened behind me as the last one disappeared, and the hoarse voice of the man I had defended said, "Thank God! there is at least one who believes in me, do you not, Henry?"

"Yes, Paul, I believe you innocent of wrong," I said, as we seated ourselves in the kitchen in our usual places, he a little to the right of the hearth, and I to the left. The fire's light played upon his features, showing his pale face and intensifying the anxiousness of his inquiry regarding my opinion as to his integrity.

"Then I am content," he smilingly said. "And Jeanne," he continued, "she, too, must have heard these repeated stories, and what does she believe?"

"And was she not here to-day?" I asked. "Has she omitted coming to see you each morning?"

"No, no," he hastened to say; "but, then, a woman's ways are indiscernible."

"True, but her loftiness of heart would scarcely allow her presence here if she believed you bad. Rest assured she believes in you, even as I do. How can we believe else in the absence of proof?"

His face showed agitation.

"If false proof were furnished, even if it bear the appearance of substantiation, would you believe in me still?"

"Of course, if you denied the proof," was my answer.

For a long time he looked into the fire and was silent.

"Henry," he said, after a time, resuming the conversation, "I have been made to feel the bitterness, not only of ostracism, but of contempt. I came among these people hoping here to spend my days in a much longed-for contentment. While I know full well that a derogative report concerning my past was left by the settler who passed here some months ago, yet, my boy, I say to you, that if ever in the past I have swerved from honor, I have done nothing but that which circumstances forced, and what would have been done by others placed as was I. With this assurance from me, do you still believe in me?"

Placing my hand in that of my old friend, I answered, "In my innermost heart, Paul, I believe you incapable of wrong doing." He breathed a long sigh and gazing into the fire, his face meanwhile brightening, he said:

"I was like unto a bark adrift in a storm, without a compass. At your assuring words I can again feel that my anchor has a firm hold."

As I arose to go, I asked him if he feared more attacks.

"No, no," he laughed; "my guardian and protector has so thoroughly driven away the enemy that a renewal of attack is improbable."

As I climbed the hill on my way home, I meditated on his anxiousness as to my position, should proof be thrown in to clinch the evidence against him, and wondered if he feared the appearance of a trumped-up proof.

Strange, you may think, that these people called up their anger and allowed it to master their sober judgment to such a degree as to prompt them to attack a helpless and defenseless old man. Many reasons might be given to partially warrant their behavior, the principal one of which is that Paul Manning, although really good at heart and worshiping God according to the Church of England's interpretation of proper worship, had never been in accord with the Dutch Reformed church of Sand Hill, to which three-fourths of our people belonged. He always remembered the treatment meted out to Servites by John Calvin, on

whose ideas this church was founded, and he foolishly had exercised his mind on this subject.

This alone furnished an incentive for suspicion, while the piratical story and superstition led them on.

In defense of my people, I ask you in rendering a decision to recall that only a few generations before, an enlightened and sister colony had openly hanged innocents on charges of witchery.

CHAPTER V

YOUNG MANHOOD

Now let me take you past another period of years and bring your attention to a time when Gilbert and I were just entering young manhood. Past the most exquisite days of all, past the little things that are of childhood's trivial sorrows and larger pleasures, and into the period that forms our shape, molds our being—that period that marks or makes us what we will be in the future.

Within the precincts of our quiet locality, peace and a fair degree of prosperity had for years prevailed. Each year patches of woodland had disappeared, and in their places there shone forth growing crops of grain, or the verdant green of hay-land, or pasture for the flock. Newcomers were in plenty, and now, indeed, it was that our valley shone forth in all its beauty. Through these years that witnessed the advancement of our people, I had grown as all boys grow, scarcely perceptible to an everyday observer until manhood is reached, so quietly and quickly that the observer wonders at it.

Did I remark that peace had prevailed? It had with one interruption. Not since the days when Paul Manning was made the subject of cruel and unwarranted gossip had anything occurred that so convulsed our serenity. Our news of happenings of the outside world

was brought to us mainly by travelers or visitors to ports on the Hudson.

On one of my journeys to Albany I had learned the facts regarding the killing, in times of peace, of a few of Boston's citizens who had bravely protested against the rugged discipline exacted by his Majesty's guard sent to quell dissatisfaction and dissension against tyrannous rule. I refer to that event that has since come to be known as the Boston Massacre. Returning home, I spread the news of the wanton sacrifice of the lives of those early colonists.

The following day many, including John Frey, Peter Wormuth, Nicholas Herkimer, and others came to see me, and expectantly inquired concerning the details. I explained, as best my hesitating vocabulary would allow, the story I had heard. Indignation was freely expressed by those present. Herkimer and Frey unhesitatingly demanded that such treatment be not swallowed without resentment.

I shall ever remember my impression of Herkimer as he arose to speak. His short, stout figure, his firm gray eye, his clean-shaven face, and strong Dutch accent, his dauntless, yet reassuring expression, filled me with a pride of country that I never knew before. In fact, I think 'twas there kindled in me the same fire, the same desire to do things that had caused my father to go forth and sacrifice his life in behalf of this identical throne that was now pressing hard the heel of oppression on the neck of a weakling.

Clearing his throat, Herkimer said:

"Friends, isolation has always been synonymous with oppression. The demonstration of force so recently witnessed is but a forerunner of more of this same treatment. Counseling prudence always, I now advise that we confer with the forces already at work, and, if practical, unite our interests and present our grievances to his Majesty."

"And should our advances be spurned, what then?" interrogated Frey.

"I hardly dare make conjecture," Herkimer replied softly, the fire in his eye kindling as he said it. Continuing, he referred to the semi-annihilation of the Jews by the Roman Emperor Vespasian, whose son had been sent to conquer them.

"A pretty spectacle," he said, "would a triumphal march through London make with the Royal Army in the lead, closely followed by captive prisoners from among us here. And the Roman emperor was no more cruel, no more fond of ostentatious display when he marched the conquered Jews through Rome than George III. would prove himself could he have the opportunity."

During these free expressions of opinion, my stepfather, otherwise than deploring the unfortunate incident, gave no expression of his attitude toward either side. This I noted, and after our friends had departed, mentioned it to him. His answer was evasive. Could it be that the English blood that coursed in his veins so warped his sentiments as to cause him to countenance the ruthlessness mentioned?

Considerable discussion followed the spreading of this news through our locality, and, as always, excitement was rife among the excitable, while the discreet ones counseled caution and advised that time might make changes that would obviate chances of general hostilities; but as time passed the ripples were smoothed and all was nearly forgotten by our slow-moving and docile folk. Save for an occasional reference, it became history of the past soon enough.

However, the manner in which the news was received, the arousing in our people of patriotic sentiment was gratifying to all who resented the intrusion our sovereign was making upon the God-given rights of man.

As I had grown older, there had developed upon me many duties, that, while pleasant, yet were of a nature that a boy of my years should not have borne. James Hastings had not a great amount of perseverence, nor did he think but that the slaves, old Billy and his son Punk, were capable of managing our farm affairs. I could not but see this, and year after year, from the time I was fifteen, I had found myself more involved in laborious undertakings than I cared for, but I did not murmur, for I ofttimes found it a pleasure to scheme and manage those affairs that few boys of my age would appreciate. At seventeen, I found myself the sole director, not only of affairs on the farm, but of my own small, lucrative business, for I had taken up the buying of furs, as my father had before me, not that I worked myself to a great extent, for I well knew that

on my twenty-first birthday the estate and equipment would be mine, but I reasoned that if all were to be mine, it behooved me to acquaint myself with its management.

Old Billy and Punk did not at first take kindly to me as their master. Between Billy and myself there had always existed a bond of friendship, and as for Punk, he being about my age, had grown up with me, and was my most subservient attendant. When, however, I assumed the position of dictator over them, they were not pleased with it, but coaxings and good usage convinced them that I was still their friend, and finally overcame their objections.

On one particular occasion, Billy rebelled against my authority to the extent of open refusal to obey me. Punishment was out of the question; my stepfather would have shrunk from it, and I was scarcely able. Nor was it my disposition to do it, could I have performed the task. On the contrary, I found a more easy and felicitous way of management. Billy was very fond of not only tending and feeding swine, but the taste and odor of cooking ham and pork to him were alluring. He had often expressed himself in hope some day of owning a pig. His fondest hopes and thoughts lay in that direction. These were expressed often to me, mingled with smacking of lips as the taste of "bakin" came to his imagination.

"Billy," said I, after a refusal to comply with my orders, "if you will always obey me and never again question my authority, you may have each year a pig.

Its ownership shall be yours to feed and eat, but mind you, the conditions."

"Oh, Mars Henry," the reply came, "youse can 'pend on me. If I has that pig, I will 'bey forever and ever."

And so it was settled. My right of management was not again an issue. Billy, with his new possession, was the happiest of all negroes. He could scarce think of else, all his conversation drifting toward the same subject. His friends and the stranger alike were persistently invited to inspect the creature, and to have refused meant the loss to the invited of the good-will of the owner of the pig. Punk fell in with his father's course.

I was not so fortunate with others as with Billy. Could I have been, this tale would not have been told. Our compact had its drawbacks, for after this, when Billy was told to perform any task, he augmented his period of rest by saying, "Jus' wait, Mars Henry, 'til I runs and feeds de pig." But the happiness this negro derived from its ownership was so abundant that I protested not at his delay while he "fed de pig." Small and trifling things from which we draw our pleasures furnish the incentive that supplies our lives with satiety and fullness. The ownership of a pig acted thus with Billy.

My schooling was now a thing of the past. Together Jeanne, Gilbert, and I had mastered geography, mathematics, and philosophy, and had obtained a little knowledge of languages. At this Jeanne and I had dis-

continued, while Gilbert was now continuing his studies in lines that were little understood by me. He had always excelled his fellow-pupils and was not content to stop as we had. When James Hastings could no longer enlighten him, he went occasionally to consult the Dominie Gros, minister of the Reformed Protestant church, a little above us, and the sole divine of our community. He showed unusual ability in acquiring knowledge and had, in matters of learning, few equals in the valley.

Nor was this his only claim on gentility. He had grown into a comely youth of more than ordinary good manners. With his fine dark eyes, his coal black hair, and pale intellectual face, he was often remarked as being handsome. In addition to this, he was as dapper in matters of dress as could be found anywhere in the colony, among the young country gentlemen. His style of dress was always a counterpart of that worn by young men at Albany. Besides, he was always neat and careful, as became the fashionable young men of that day. His mind, as was his father's, was already settled as to his future vocation. Few but knew that Gilbert was fitting for the law. He had contemplated a course in Yale College and was now prepared to enter the following fall. The farm had always been considered mine. This being the case, my livelihood was secure, while his father was anxious that Gilbert should engage in something more to his liking and ability.

While I felt as proud of this as did anyone, yet I also felt that Gilbert should assist somewhat in the

work on the estate. This he considered unfit for him and refused. He could not be appeased as easily as Billy had been, and I was forced to give up my attempt to get assistance from him.

Now James Hastings had reached that time in life when desire for great activity is lacking, and year after year I marked the changes that time made upon him and my mother alike. Lines that formerly were invisible now were to be seen on their faces. Their hair, once luxuriant and glossy, was now streaked with the gray that marks post-maturity, yet the quiet lives they had led had left on their countenances the marks of peace. My mother yet spoke to me of my father, telling me how much I resembled him, but such occasions were far apart now, and I reasoned that her present husband was all that she could hope for, and I loved and respected him, not alone on my mother's account, but for himself. He was all I could wish for in a stepfather.

Paul Manning, too, had passed over this interval with the marks of age visible in his silvery locks, that had now grown snow-white, yet he retained the ruddy glow of youth on his cheek, save where time had further indented a line here and there on his face. But these were so slight that otherwise than his hair he looked no older than when I first remembered him. He sometimes spoke of the rumors that had been circulated concerning him a few years past, and inquired if they were retold. I had always assured him that they were long since forgotten. I grieved at informing him the facts

and am afraid that my answers, while they served to appease him, were not truthful, for these rumors had persistently followed him. They were not often spoken of by our people, yet strangers in the valley were always informed regarding Paul's past.

As the years sped, I had come to know him more fully, to appreciate his kindness, and to sympathize with him in his loneliness, and very few days passed but I visited him in the evening, or he came to me and talked as I was busy at my work. He realized my feelings toward him, and often said that Jeanne and I were his only friends. Jeanne, too, had not forgotten him who had cared for and accompanied her on childhood rambles in days gone by. Were he indisposed, he was attended by her and by me in turn or together. He had never outgrown the way he had of speaking to us collectively as "my children." His warmest friendship we still retained, while his advice to me, always forthcoming, and the best at that, was invaluable.

As for myself, I was nearly six feet in height, muscular, and large framed. Many wrestling matches came off at our gatherings, and few there were that could long stand before me. My eyes and hair were intensely black, the one large and not overbright, the other coarse and heavy. And if my eyes bespoke the backwardness and diffidence of mind, they but spake the truth. Although not of morbid sensibilities, yet there was within me something not as yet developed that held me back, a something that comes to many of my age, while others never seem to experience those days

of awkwardness. And yet, I, who understood myself, could not fathom others. The lack of this requisite caused me loss both social and pecuniary.

If I were thus, Gilbert was my opposite in all things. Place a silent, non-confident, somewhat moody lad under the environment that I had grown up under, and he will be as I. One disposed as Gilbert will get on anywhere. He is sure to develop the brightest of his gifts early. He will never know the meaning of diffidence. A girl seldom is as either of us was. Like flowers well watered, given plenty of sunshine, they will develop anywhere. Such was Jeanne.

CHAPTER VI

JEANNE

As time had dealt thus with those mentioned, its bounteous imprint was to be seen on Jeanne. She was now leaving girlhood behind and entering the threshold of womanhood. Her education being finished, she was at home or away, according to the moods of her mother—sometimes at home for long periods, or in New York visiting at the home of relatives. Returning from the latter, ofttimes they were accompanied by their friends, for the most part French. Their chattings were to me a mixed jargon of sound, as they roamed over dale and mound in search of nothing in particular, or gave little parties to which I was sometimes, to my delight, invited, although afterwards I pondered as to why I went, for my awkwardness banished any pleasure I might have felt. Jeanne and I often met at Paul Manning's, or she came to our home with her mother. Indeed I saw her often enough to have been more gallant in her presence.

The boy and girl familiarity had long since passed away. This had occurred as we entered our teens, and now that we were old enough to understand, I labored hard to recall that former condition of friendship, but my manner was so altered that had she desired it, I should have repulsed unwittingly any advances she

made. Hardly can I be blamed solely for this, for the change in her had been such that a gallant knight might have shrank from her, feeling his own defects, as he gazed at her fresh and fair face, her willowy sylph-like form that each day increased in charm.

She was now beautiful indeed and the admired of all who came in contact with her. Far above in the upper valley, below, and down the river, she was known as the beautiful French maid of the Mohawk.

Shall I describe her ? Alas, my pen fails me. But who will speak of those marvelous charms of that magically captivating maiden if not I? In suppleness and form she was perfection itself, approaching as near to divinity as it is possible for humanity to do. She was one of those rare creatures who while not tall could not be considered short. She was short enough to be called not ungainly, tall enough to be elegant. Her perfect carriage and dignified movements bespoke high ideals and the lofty purpose of her heart.

On her head there rested a crown of luxuriant golden hair, glorious and ruddy, parted at one side, and usually worn in a large knot at her neck; this style of hairdressing added to her many charms, the one of quaintness. Eyes of deep blue, large, clear and fearless. Eyes that reflected health, honesty of conviction, and sincerity of heart. Eyes that no man could look into and not feel the controlling influence of the magical spell that emanated from their depths. But, however beautiful she was, high above this and overtopping the reflection of radiance cast by her face and figure, there

rose preëminently the goodness of her mind, the sweetness of her soul.

After knowing and seeing her as I did, do you ask if I loved her ? Yes, I admit, I was her ungallant swain lover. For me not to have loved her would have proven myself to have been a being so cold as to have deserved ostracism forever from her sex. Although my passion consumed me, excluded reason and enthroned jealousy, yet, in spite of its intensity, I dared not tell her of it. Did she guess? I did not know. If she did, her powers of divining my thoughts were superior, were more penetrating than those of my old companion Paul, for even he who knew me best did not mistrust it. Toward her outwardly I maintained a coldness that was as intense as was my inner love. Try as I would, civility and courteousness were the only outward manifestations of my feeling toward her. Strange, you may say, that I who loved her better than life should not have told her of it in a manly way. But I could not do it. Why, I do not know. I was brave enough to have stormed a fortress if necessary, but to approach her with words of love I could not. If I had done this, many things might have been changed. Ofttimes in the few succeeding years, I said to myself, "If I had only spoken before another came into her life, before she had considered one beside me, it might have been different."

In silence I bore my secret. In silence I bore my longings, hoping, waiting and trusting. If she had manifested one iota of such feelings toward me as I

felt toward her, I am sure I should have mustered courage sufficient to have spoken. Of this I looked for some signal, some word as a sign, but in vain. These were my thoughts repeated ever in my waking hours, and retold in my dreams.

In the midst of my most ardent sufferings, a happening came at this time that further disturbed me. Gilbert was preparing for the time when he was to enter Yale College, and in the course of preparation had made several trips to Albany. He at last returned from the final trip, bringing an abundant supply of wearing apparel of fineness and texture such as I had not seen before: velvet breeches, fancy waistcoats, high-heeled silver-buckle-bedecked footwear, and satin-lined dress coats in profusion.

That evening as he unpacked these garments, I looked on and admired them without an atom of envy. In fact I who had never worn such raiment was rather proud to think that he should be garbed as well or better than those with whom he should come in contact.

The family were gathered around him, and admiring in turn each garment as he exhibited it. While our attention was drawn to a waistcoat that was passing from one to another, he slyly slipped a small package into the chest that had been placed near as the receptacle for his appurtenances. I saw this plainly, but he was not aware that I did. Instantly I connected Jeanne with the packet he had secreted so stealthily. Some present, I conjectured, and I longed for circumstances in some way to confirm my suspicion, trusting

that events might disclose to me the tenor of this. In the midst of my surmising, the voice of James Hastings brought me back to the present. "Put on the coat, son Gilbert," he said. "Let your old father see his son in the garb of a gentleman." Gilbert complied. Removing the like garments he wore, he donned the brightest and showiest of the waistcoats, the longest and the finest of the outer coats, and holding high his chin strutted about the room. His father, with glee, patted his shoulder and said, "None but a Hastings could grace such apparel, and such apparel is befitting to none other better than you."

The enjoyment my mother felt at this plainly showed itself in her appreciable looks, and the words as she said to me, "Henry, admire your brother. You who care not for dress surely admire Gilbert's appearance now."

A commonplace remark would have sufficed, but instead I was mute. Inwardly I said, "A stuffed ass in a gilded blanket."

Without speaking, I lighted the candle and made ready to ascend the stairs leading to my chamber. As I passed Gilbert, he with a sarcastic look on his face peered into mine and said, "Jealous."

"No," I blurted out, "not jealous, I am merely surprised at your extravagance." He gave a little laugh as I passed on.

This suspicion regarding what I had seen unsettled me for days. I could not but know all of Gilbert's movements, and knew he made several trips to Ma-

"With a sarcastic look on his face peered into mine and said, 'Jealous!'"

dame's ere he departed. The day preceding his departure, I opened a wardrobe that stood in the hall between my chamber and his. The wardrobe had been used by us jointly since our childhood. As I was looking in it for something I wished, accidentally I knocked a package from a small shelf that was in one end. On striking the floor, the package opened and exposed a locket and chain, together with a morocco case. Without intent, I had discovered the secret which Gilbert thought to keep from us.

The locket contained a miniature portrait of Gilbert. So, that was the gift for Jeanne.

Why was he to make her such a present, and if for her, why had he not already presented it? Did the fact that it was yet in his possession mean that she had rejected him? If so, why did he continue to visit at her home?

I well knew that by watching him and the locket, the result would be known to me, and that I might learn how matters were progressing. Carefully replacing both locket and casket, I felt sure that Gilbert would not know that other eyes than his had inspected his intended present.

On the morrow he was to start, and I surmised that this evening he would make his final visit to Jeanne. My expectations were fulfilled. In the evening he went to his room, and I sitting below, without an effort, could distinctly hear him moving about.

On his way out, he stopped, quickly opened and closed the wardrobe, and passed down and out the door.

I am afraid I was rather sullen and disagreeable in my conversation that evening, seeing that my mother chided me for some hasty answer I made her.

"Do you wish you were going with Gilbert?" she asked, "or does your regret at his going make you so ill-tempered?"

"Neither," I laconically replied, and rising left for bed.

Smothering the jealousy in my heart the best I could, I sat in the darkness planning and watching for the return of Gilbert. Heretofore the facts of this incident had been made known to me without any effort on my part. I would not knowingly have pried into his secret, but now my curiosity to know, the great interest that I felt, the love I bore for Jeanne prompted me to do the only dishonorable act I ever did to Gilbert.

At last he came, and as he entered his room, I silently passed into the hall, and through a seam in the loose board partition saw him take the morocco case from his pocket and place it on the bureau.

"Rejected," I murmured, so loudly he must have heard, for he at once turned and looked in my direction. Noiselessly and with mirth within, I shrank back in my room. All was well so far; Jeanne was not willing to marry him. Pondering as to why, I somewhat foolishly prided myself that I was the cause.

The next morning we witnessed his departure. Jeanne, her mother, and Paul Manning had come up to say good-by. All were profuse in their good wishes. I carefully noted that Jeanne shook his hand in adieu

without tremor of lip or moistening of eye, which was in marked contrast to the emotions of her mother, of mine, and of James Hastings. I cordially pressed Gilbert's hand, wished him Godspeed and nothing more.

Old Billy was to accompany him as far as Albany, and as they passed down the highway, many farewells were waved by Gilbert and by those behind, with one exception, myself.

As we reëntered the house, a degree of good feeling filled me to the point of hilarity. While tears were flowing around me, I had a hard task to contain my emotions, which were of a different kind from others. I knew that now I should have Jeanne to myself, and that without even this hoped-for chance I should at least be rid of the taunts and jibes of my father's son.

Assuring myself that now I would win the object of my affections, I decided that, like Gilbert, I would spend occasionally an evening at her home. I had never up to this time made her a call of the kind, seldom going to her home unless on an errand. Yet we met often enough to keep somewhat in touch with one another.

My heart nearly failed me as I started out one evening some two weeks after Gilbert's departure, to do as he often did, with misgivings and doubtings as to my ability to entertain as he could with his ready wit and perfect manners.

Jeanne met me at the door, invited me in, and received me with a graciousness that somewhat reassured me. Had her mother been as gracious, I might still have felt

more at ease than I did. She nodded coldly at me, and was silent for some time, during which Jeanne and I discussed little affairs that our neighborhood had in common. Finally the Madame ventured the remark, "By this time, Gilbert has reached his destination."

At this allusion to him, falsely feeling that he who stood between me and Jeanne was many miles away, and that by a word I might enhance my own chances, I replied, "Yes, undoubtedly, but I apprehend that when he finally returns, filled with the knowledge he has gained, his former acquaintances will hardly receive the attention they have in the past."

This remark of mine, perchance ungallant, and even true enough, as one like him could not be expected to do otherwise than I had said, was uncalled for. It precipitated a rebuke for me at once.

"Careful what you say, Monsieur Henry; your brother may in time deserve your approval. In time, he may be your equal; he may even be your better."

Jeanne came to the rescue by saying, "Mother, you misunderstood Henry's speech. He means that Gilbert will be so changed that his former friends, not having kept pace with him, will be uncongenial."

Madame's eyes gleamed for a moment, then she resumed her former attitude of silence. Jeanne and I talked yet a little while until, feeling that my first attempt was a failure, I left for home lamenting as I went the unfortunate speech which I had uttered concerning Gilbert.

It had required no small amount of effort on my part

to make this call on my beloved, and that it had not turned out better was harassing to my already impassioned mind. I did not again attempt a like experiment.

At the coming of each post, Madame and Jeanne came to the house to listen to the reading of Gilbert's letters. At first it grieved me to think that news from him was so eagerly sought after, but later the coming of the post was looked for by me too, as I could see Jeanne at these times for a few moments and sometimes for quite a little period.

As the letters were read, Madame gave forth appreciable approval of the contents by little exclamations in French, as we listened to Gilbert's expression of enjoyable experiences, or related his success with obtuse subjects in which he excelled others of his class. Jeanne did not appear to be as anxious as her mother over these epistles. On the contrary, she gave evidence of only passive interest. This I noticed and rejoiced.

The year wore away and the time approached when Gilbert was to return for the summer. I dreaded his return, yet was not so sure that his interests had improved during his absence. While I could not deny that her mother's choice for Jeanne's husband lay in Gilbert, yet as for Jeanne herself, I hardly thought her in favor of him. As yet, I doted on the fact that his letters were listened to by her without any expression of eagerness, nor did I surmise that his home-coming created any expectant desires in her heart. Yet if he were not to return, I should have felt more at ease.

CHAPTER VII

THE RAISING BEE

Among these scenes of newness and privation, when all felt that success would only follow strenuous economy and thrift, and perhaps self-denial itself, there were occasionally bright spots in our lives, oases, as it were. The recollection of these pleasantries furnished us with delight, and the enjoyment thereof with diversion.

Sir William Johnson sometimes entertained at the great manor house, that it pleased him to call Johnson Hall. To his parties were invited those of high social standing and sometimes others, whose advice he sought. Only a few of our people were among either class, and save for the Freys, Peter Wormuth, Nicholas Herkimer, and James Hastings, none of our people had been so honored. Yet their simple minds did not seem to worry over this social distinction, and they were content to keep the "even tenor of their way."

Through the summer months there were held picnics or gatherings, as they were called, and sometimes bees, when many neighbors would assist one in performing arduous and tedious tasks. In the winter-time, when the white mantle covered all, and the cold made these impossible, parties would be given by those of larger

houses and means that shortened the long winter months.

But a particular source of enjoyment were the bees. No great tasks were performed by any neighbor without the help of others, who gratuitously gave their assistance, all heavy work being done in this way. On many occasions of this kind the day was turned into a gala day, and men, women and children, and slaves came, the latter to do much of the more laborious work.

It is of an occasion of this kind that I propose to make mention. The greater percentage of buildings were of logs, a few of brick and others of stone. Brick as a material was used by a few of the more wealthy, while those of smaller means built of stone or logs respectively in order named. William Frey had erected a sawmill on Bowman's Creek below, and of late many buildings were being made of sawed lumber and hewn timber.

Crossing the river at Wormuth's Ford, a point just south of our home and where Fort Plain was erected, thence traversing the King's highway west for nearly two miles, one came to the vicinity of the Palatine church. Near this and to the east lived one Jacob Nellis.

All the spring and early summer had he used his spare time in preparing for barn building. Such preparation consisted in hewing great pine timbers from the forests that lay at the back of his home, or of hauling logs by ox teams to the mill of Frey some six miles below, and bringing back the boards and plankings cut

from the same. He and his sons, together with Paul Manning, had bored, shaved, adzed, and sawed at this material for many days, and now, at last, all was ready to advance to the second stage of barn building, that of its "raising."

Invitations had been personally given to all inhabitants of the river country, from eight miles above to six below. Should anyone have been slighted in this matter, he would have considered himself grossly wronged and insulted. Sir William Johnson might have his gorgeous receptions, his sumptuous feasts, surrounded by his savage friends, attended by his Indian paramour and her bastard brats, yet, give this folk their own way of making merry, and all was well, but to omit any from the invitation was unpardonable. These invitations included women and men, girls and boys, and shall I qualify the latter by affixing sweethearts?

Few four-wheeled conveyances were owned then in the valley, and we were the fortunate possessors of one, and on this day a team was hitched to it, and mother, my stepfather, and Madame and Jeanne climbed into its cramped and uncomfortable interior. Driven by old Billy, they departed for the scene of the raising soon after the noon hour.

Gilbert, who had just returned from Yale for the summer, and myself acted as post riders, while Punk trudged afoot, carrying something under a green baize cover, that in its outline resembled a violin.

The King's highway seldom passed a more cheerful or more noisy procession over its smooth surface than

on this day, as we fell in with the VanAlstynes, the Wormuths, the Seebers, the Rolfes, and the Freys and proceeded up the river amidst the tooting of horns, the barking of dogs, the shouting of young men, the giggling and mirthful expressions of young ladies, and the smiling looks and pleasant exclamations of the elders.

How smart they looked! the VanAlstynes, like ourselves, in a chaise, the others ahorse, followed behind by a retinue of slaves afoot. The horses wearing tri-colored ribbons in their bridles, saddles and vehicles bedecked with daisies and buttercups. Especially was Matthew Wormuth's outfit gorgeous in its pretensions, for besides the decorations already mentioned, which the horse wore in profusion, young Wormuth himself was attired in silken waistcoat of a flaming yellow, an elongated topcoat, high and shining great boots, while on his head was worn a beaver covering.

I was seized with a feeling of jealousy, as several young men rode up and saluted us, casting wistful glances at Jeanne, but especially was I incensed at young Wormuth, who, shining in his brilliant array of colors, came up and spoke to Jeanne, complimenting her on her radiant countenance, the style and becomingness of her little silk bonnet. But ere I had dwelt on this long, we were within welcoming distance of those who had preceded us and were at our destination.

"Hail, hail! Greetings, greetings!" were the cries that came from the many already present.

We answered them by hearty "Greetings, greet-

ings!" "Good cheer, good cheer!" And good cheer it was that prevailed among us that day.

My feelings toward young Wormuth were further accentuated, when upon arriving he hastily dismounted and assisted Jeanne as her dainty figure passed down from the wagon to the ground. I preceded Gilbert, having handed my bridle to Punk and hurried in vain to perform the same pleasant task. Observing my mortification, Jeanne looked at me coyly as she said, "Now mind, Henry, I will dance with you first."

It was now Gilbert's turn to experience disappointment, and his face plainly showed it as Jeanne pacifically promised me the first dance.

"And you next, Gilbert," she said all smilingly, wishing to spread harmony.

I have already said that good cheer was a factor that day, the Herkimers, the Campbells, the Dingmans, the Devendorfs, and others from above joining with us from below, assisting in the general dispensing of the good cheer so prevalent in those days, but alas, somewhat wanting in these later-day festivities.

The horses having been unhitched and unsaddled, and tethered in the near-by forests, our party advanced toward the place whereon the barn structure was to be erected.

"Yo heave! Yo heave!" were the cries that drew us toward the place where already the timbers were being pieced together in "bents."

"All ready now, Yo heave! Yo heave!"

The young men of our party fell in with the lusty yokels and darkies and were soon hard at work, while the older ones looked on or made suggestions. Piece after piece was put together. Bent after bent was pinned. By three o'clock all was in readiness for the real raising.

The many who had felt themselves called upon to officiate as supervisors, those who felt that upon them devolved all the importance of the occasion, now exercised their voices, but not their muscles, and in lusty vociferousness their "Together! All heave! Up she goes!" were deafening.

Under the guidance of master builder Paul Manning, bent after bent, plate after plate, brace after brace, purline after purline were hoisted to their proper places, pinned, and stayed. No sooner was this completed and the sleepers laid than twenty or more young louts, including myself, fell upon and placed in position the flooring, that, when laid, was to comprise the threshing floor. I doubt if ever a threshing floor was laid quicker, better, or with more energy. Once laid, these twenty young men with as many small jack-planes set themselves to the task of planing and smoothing the surface. The reason for this expedient preparation will be seen later.

The elder men, their wives, and the maidens had passed the afternoon as best suited their tastes. The men in discussing crops, neighborhood affairs, the barn that was building, and, most portentous of all, the doings of certain Bostonians, who had emptied tea in the

harbor some months before, feather and tar bedecked his Majesty's tax-collectors, and pronounced railriding the favored means of assisting others of this same sovereign's minions in quitting their presence.

"They do say," quoth John Frey, as his eye twinkled, "that the water of the bay is yet tea soaked, and many recognizing the peculiar curative properties of tea and salt use the water of the bay as a wash for the affection of sore eyes."

All laughed at this sally of wit, excepting William Frey, relative of the former, who tartly replied, "Warn your Bostonian friends to wax careful lest their eyesight became over stringent from a too free use of the water, and blindness of judgment overtake them."

Few present were in accord with the sentiment of the reply. It fell on empty ears, and silence followed its enunciation.

Women discussed preserving, drying, and the caring for of fruits. Maidens simpered as they compared finery and samplers, or discussed new designs for coverlets and spreads, their conversation interrupted by sundry coy glances in the direction of the lusty swains, sometimes returned by the latter, in which case a general giggle precipitated itself among those who saw what was transpiring.

Loud huzzahs of welcome greeted the host and his sons as they emerged from the woodshed, annex of the house, rolling toward the crowd a cask of small beer, closely followed by maidens who had been summoned, bearing between them great baskets of bread and beef,

cheese, doughnuts and cookies. The eatables were spread out over several temporarily constructed tables, so that all might have access, while the small beer was elevated by rolling upon two skids, and pewter cups in profusion laid near by.

The barn raising, meanwhile, had progressed rapidly; the frame was now entirely up, including the rafters, while the threshing floor had been smoothed, rubbed, and polished, until it shone and glistened under the slanting rays of the setting sun. The barn was now in such shape that the carpenters could alone finish it, and the feast next absorbed the attention of everyone, excepting the blacks who were to feast after the others were finished.

That all were blessed with excellent appetites was evidenced by the way the edibles disappeared, washed down by flagons of beer, the pleasing experiences of which were made apparent by the multiplied smacking of lips and the fast working of jowls.

Fun and merriment existed everywhere. One young woman started a bit of merriment by throwing a doughnut at a young man named Snell, from up the river.

Snell exclaimed, "Oh, I'll pay you for that," and started in pursuit of the young woman, who had sped away.

In vain did she try to dodge him. Finally darting behind an elm tree, one of many that lined the road, he followed. Directly several loud smacks were heard from this direction.

"Haw, haw, haw," laughed Matthew Wormuth, and

directly he was struck by a similar missile, as Abigail Campbell started to run in the opposite direction from the previous couple. Instantly the air was full of doughnuts, and the ground echoed with the noise of running feet, as one after another of the young men pursued their respective sweethearts.

One Clarissa McDougall, who had before exhibited a soft spot for me, seeing the game as played by others, let fly a doughnut at me. I dodged, only to receive the doughnut full in the breast. She turned and ran, exclaiming, "Come on, Henry, don't be afraid."

I glanced at Jeanne, who had taken no part in the crude love-making scheme of the other maidens. A smile and a shake of her head decided me; I remained where I stood.

Shouts of derision, accompanied by exclamation of, "He dare not," "He's afraid," "Go on, Henry," "He has never been kissed," made my face burn with mortification, but I held my position of defying the challenge. Miss Clarissa slowly returned, and with a contemptuous glance toward me, selected another doughnut and hurled it at Gilbert, who promptly chased her away down the road.

Jeanne came toward me, and said, so low that no others heard it, "I don't approve of such boldness by maidens. Do you?"

"No," I replied, wondering whether I did or not, for such things were the custom.

"I was glad you did not go after Clarissa," she said.

"So am I," I answered, and I was, for bashfulness had always hindered me from taking part in these frivolous games, and in truth I had never kissed a girl.

"Shall we not sit down on yon bench?" she continued, moving toward one near by. Without answering, I mechanically followed her. Once seated I could think of nothing to say, while she chatted on about the large number present, the beauty of the full moon which was just making itself seen over the eastern hills.

Meanwhile, the couples were returning from their love-making walks, arm in arm, or in little groups of four or six, and stood about talking and giggling, the boys' faces bespeaking earnestness, the girls' all blushes and radiance.

By this time the slaves had been feasted, and were now busy filling huge potash caldrons with pine fagots to furnish light outside, while innumerable candle lanthorns, brought by everyone at the request of the host, were placed around the structure of the threshing floor.

Soon the weird, melodious music of stringed instruments, of a nature only produced by negroes, greeted our ears and caused the young people to wend their way toward the smooth threshing floor that was to be christened not by the resounding whacks of threshing flail, but by the pat of the feet of rustic dancers.

Jeanne and I observed what was passing. Naturally silent, I now was filled with thoughts of a nature that forbid me even speaking the few sentences that I might have felt courtesy forced me to speak. The scene before me awakened new thoughts and dreams or intensi-

fied the old ones, for I had not given up hopes of Jeanne, but was biding my time and waiting for developments. Out from under and beyond the shadows cast by the trees the full moon now flooded the landscape with its silvery whiteness, illuminating the river and making it look like a phosphorescent serpent, as it flowed onward in its course, while closer by, the ribbed frame of the barn was illuminated by the fire the pitch-pine in the caldrons was sending out, and the lanthorns in the capacity of the lesser lights were throwing a pale glow over the dancing floor. Such scenes would awaken romance in the breast of anyone, were he not a stone, and I felt within me an awakening, a new revival of my love for the maiden who sat at my side.

Now the fiddles and viols were in tune, now there was harmony of sounding-posts and strings. Old Billy, as leader, was putting rosin on his bow the final time, ere he sang out, "All salute."

Without speaking, Jeanne and I arose, and made our way to the dancing floor. As we climbed upon the temporary bridge to this floor, I bethought me of Jeanne's promise of the first dance. Indeed I had thought of it often this afternoon, but no sooner had we entered than as partners were being chosen for the reel with which the dance was to open, Nicholas Herkimer came toward us and, after making a profound bow, said to Jeanne, "Host Snell requests that I head the reel. Will you assist me, Miss Jeanne?"

She involuntarily glanced at me.

"Go," I said, "surely, I waive my privilege to Mr.

Herkimer." I could not have done otherwise to one of his importance and elegance.

She hesitated as if not knowing what to do, and then walked off on the arm of Herkimer to head the reel. And head it they did, tripping a lead so dainty that none could imitate it, try as they would.

Once this was done, I expected Herkimer to return Jeanne to me, but he did not, whether by her choice or not, I cannot say. As the yokels clapped their hands for the music to resume, at once I made my way toward her, to observe Gilbert going in the same direction. I reached her side and said, "Come, Jeanne, our dance is now."

Gilbert crowded me aside, and as if to reply to my assertion to Jeanne, said, "You gave your privilege to another. Make way for me."

I appealed to Jeanne.

"Now, Henry, don't pout," she rejoined, "what Gilbert says is true. You gave your dance to Mr. Herkimer."

It was true, I admit, and so I pouted out the time, waiting for the next dance with Jeanne.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOMEWARD RIDE

Paul Manning was yet looked upon by many with suspicion, and had not entirely outlived the apprehensions of the people concerning his past record. He was at this bee only by virtue of his ability as a carpenter. I had only a chance to greet him during the afternoon, for he, as master builder, had been busy; but as soon as the repast had been eaten, he made ready to start for home, and before going came to me and whispered in my ear, "Why don't you take Jeanne home on your horse with you?" and was gone. I pondered upon the proposition and wondered if I could be brave enough to ask her, and if she consented would her mother allow her to do it. This I had thought of at different times during the evening, but had not spoken to her about it.

She had been very kind to me this day. I wondered whether through real feeling or sympathy, but was quite sure the latter was the case. Later in the evening, while we were passing through the figures of a quadrille, I abruptly said, "Were you not cramped this afternoon in the chaise?"

Laughingly she replied, "Well, mother grumbled some at it, but I didn't mind a bit. I am afraid,

though, we somewhat inconvenienced the other occupants."

"I think you were all inconvenienced; the chaise was too crowded. Would you not prefer going home with me?"

"Yes," she hesitatingly answered, "if mother does not care."

I determined that her mother should not have a chance to decide the matter. Already the board benches that lined the dancing floor as a place for those who danced to rest and for the elder folks who only looked on, were gradually being deserted. Knowing that soon my people would think it time to return home and that Jeanne once under the surveillance of her mother would not be able to go with me, as soon as our dance was over, I looked up Punk and bade him fetch my horse in readiness at the gate.

I sat by Jeanne's side and waited for a time. Eventually Gilbert came up and seated himself at her other side and chatted complacently as if to ignore me. When ample time for Punk to make ready the horse had expired, I said, "Miss Jeanne, are you not thirsty and shall we not go to the spring for a drink?" Without replying, she arose, and excusing herself to Gilbert, passed outside with me. The spring was located between us and the gate, on our path, and after drinking of its cool, soft liquid, I asked her to walk on a little farther, to which she readily assented. Upon viewing my mare with Punk holding her, if Jeanne divined my purpose she gave no sign.

"Come, let us be gone," I said.

"But mother——" It was new for her to assert her own will or desires, and she was fearful of the results.

"Punk, tell the Madame that her daughter, Jeanne, has gone home with me. Tell James Hastings to drive fast while we will go slow, and we will all arrive home at about the time."

"Mount quickly, Jeanne," as I held out my hand for her foot, to assist her in mounting. Up, up and she was ahorse, while I swung up in front. "Don't forget, Punk, the message you are to deliver," I called out and we were gone.

Once started, I could hardly believe I was myself. Such a thing as being alone with a young lady for even a brief space of time was an experience unknown to me. I was astounded at the audacity that had prompted me to defy a stern mother, and cavalier-like bear away with me the maiden of my heart. I allowed my mare to go as she pleased, hoping that a slow gait would be her choice, thinking to get all the pleasure the time and opportunity afforded. And enjoy it we did then, but later I had reason to regret my boldness and strategy.

"Isn't it enjoyable to-night?" said Jeanne. "In the winter, I often wonder why mother chooses to live here, but the summers and autumns are so grand, and when they are here, I am glad that she stays on. Do you know that each year I love this valley more, each spring with its flowers and balminess, each summer

with its shade and ripeness, each fall with its golden-leafed forests, its gathering of fruit and grain, all as they pass by make me love it more. To-night in this beautiful moon-lighted scene I could ride on forever, and yet to carry out my mid-winter wish, some day we may go back from whence we came, as our friends there often urge."

"But you desire to remain here," I said.

"Sometimes, yes, sometimes no; to-night I feel I could never leave." She breathed a long sigh as she continued, "And yet these people, crude and unsophisticated—I was glad you refused to chase Clarissa McDougall away and kiss her, unmaidenly hussy that she is. The unblushing boldness of some maidens is beyond me."

It was a new phase of propriety to me and I wished to discuss it, so I inquired, "Do you think it wrong in maidens to allow themselves to be kissed? Do you not expect to be kissed yourself perhaps some time?"

"Well, I don't think about that," she answered.

"If young people were betrothed might they not, with perfect propriety, kiss one another?"

"Yes, if alone."

The answer betrayed suppressed merriment. I turned and glanced in her face. "Seriously now, Jeanne," I asked, "could you ever allow such freedom to be taken with you? Could you think so well of someone as to allow, nay, as to welcome such evidence of sentiment?"

"I think I could." Slowly the answer had come.

I was frightened at myself, for I turned in the saddle, placed my arm about her, and my lips to hers, and unhesitatingly kissed her again and again. And she, though somewhat frightened, for she trembled in my arms, did not try to repress me, but instead kissed me in return.

The god of love, who thus prompted me then to do this, must have imbued those promptings with a certain recklessness, for such confidence was new with me.

And, oh, joy! She had not resisted my advances, but had seemed to enjoy it all. Only a moment before she had told me she only approved of such manifestations when people were in love, and great then was my joy when I reasoned that indeed she loved me. But why me, with my shambling six feet of awkwardness, my swarthy Dutch skin, my slowness of speech and thought, characteristics of my race? Why not the dashing Gilbert with his white, transparent skin, his coal black and piercing eye, his elegant and conventional make-up, his gentlemanly speech and learning? Besides, he loved her, too. This she must realize. And yet, she had given me to believe she cared for me.

But even though my success as a love-maker was fruitful, and the adored Jeanne had not been averse to my expressed sentiment, although unexpected and shockingly spontaneous enough to have prejudiced her maidenly modesty, yet, my experience with women was so limited that I did not realize the full purport of her

"I turned in my saddle, placed my arm about her, and my lips to hers. . . . ."

non-resistance and caress, and I failed to follow it up by a declaration of love.

I reasoned that she certainly appreciated my interest toward her and must know I loved her, while her returned kiss satisfied the ardent desire that had permeated my thoughts by day and my dreams by night ever since we had reached adolescence. But had I known the ways of woman better, I should have realized that she must needs have fully expressed and plainly stipulated declarations ere she feels sure of a man's love.

But allowing that I had declared myself then and there, I am afraid the future would have held even more bitterness than it did, and in any event, no matter whether I had declared myself or not, there was the Madame's desire concerning Jeanne to be dealt with. Loosing my arm around her, I resumed the control of my mare, who had meanwhile, feeling her freedom, increased her pace until my half-turned position in the saddle had become perilous.

Soon we were across the river and nearing home. Already the rumble of the chaise and the tramp of hoofs could we hear, and we had scarcely passed a hundred rods from the river's edge, when the noise of crunching gravel as they crossed at the ford warned us that our party was close upon us, and that further demonstrations of affection would be visible to those behind, for the moonbeams were of a peculiar whitish brilliancy.

Stopping my mare at the Madame's gate, I dismounted and assisted Jeanne down. Patting the mare's

nose, not knowing what to speak of, we waited for the approach of the belated party. As in the order of our going to the scene of the raising some hours before, myself omitted, the remainder of our party came toward us. Gilbert riding on ahead, his scarce audible "Good-evening" as he passed us had in it a ring of disappointment, and yet one of challenge. The ponderous chaise came up. I passed my bridle to Punk, and assisted the Madame to alight. She having alighted, old Billy said, "Gid dup," and I was in the presence of the one I loved, and of her mother who disliked me as heartily as I hoped her daughter loved me.

"What a beautiful night," Jeanne murmured, "and how I enjoyed our ride home, Henry. And, mother, I scarce believed myself that I was home, Henry's fleet mare came so fast, guided safely by his hand."

This last, it seemed to me, framed an anxious inquiry as to how her mother would look upon her newly assumed position of independence.

"Yes," I interjected, "the mare is some fast. It being so beautiful out in the moonlight, I invited Jeanne to ride with me. It was safe for her to do so, I assure you. The mare is gentle and my hands harmless."

"Yes, indeed, you are a good horseman," retorted the Madame. "Your adroitness in the horse line has made you attempt other things, yet I hardly expect you to become as successful at the latter as at the former. Having this ability as a horseman, you should strive now toward at least culture, if not more. In this you

may succeed, Monsieur. You may even become the equal of your brother, Gilbert."

This had been delivered in a defiant manner and tinctured with a slight French accent. At its conclusion, and before I could answer this half insult, half, because my defiance of her authority was certainly uncultured and justifiable only so far as my own wishes were concerned, she said, "Come, Jeanne," and throwing back her head passed toward the house followed by Jeanne.

As the Madame never deigned to look back on me, but marched stolidly ahead, Jeanne took advantage of this momentarily to turn and wave her hand as I was mounting my mare.

On another occasion a few years later, and under entirely different circumstances, I saw again the wave of that fair hand and the sweep of a tiny lace kerchief it held.

CHAPTER IX

THE COMING OF THE MESSENGER

Two winters had passed since the last event mentioned, since the time when, uncontrolled, my love had evinced itself toward Jeanne in a manner that surprised me. Two winters through which the ice on the slough-holes had quieted the incessant warm-weather croakings of the frogs; in which the bass, the speckled trout, the scavenger pike, and the cannibal pickerel had run up the many coves and small streams, to escape the chill and the anchor-ice of the deep water; in which the robins, the thrushes, and the bobolinks had vacated our land and gone South in search of balminess; in which the vigilant woodchuck had burrowed, and the forest trees laid off their foliage, as if with no impediment they could better defy the winter winds.

These winters were followed by two summers, in which the lazy winter-logged fish had warmed their scaly and benumbed bodies in the succulent, tepid water, and become again lifesome. The frogs, too, had thawed out and begun again the prolific laying of milt and spawn from which tadpoles, and in time frogs, might evolve, and add their voices in vociferous song to those of their parents.

The birds, too, had returned and had twice built their nests and reared their feathered broods and added

gladsome carols to the thousands of natural sweet songs that emanate from nature's own pets. Twice had the trees expanded their buds and shot out tiny tendrils that grew into leaves, underneath whose shade the weary traveler might go and rest, or the tired ox be driven to feed during the noon-tide hour.

At present, the latter of these summers was here; but the brightness of nature was not noticed, for the red tide of war was upon the land and its presence occupied so much attention that none saw the beauties of field or forest. The rebellion of the colonies had now reached such dimensions that either side could not retreat from the conditions forced upon them. For more than a year, although our valley had not felt the heavy hand of war, yet the oft-repeated news of the death of one of our brave men who had gone out in service reminded us of its existence.

Yet, save for the absence of our gatherings, for the sorrow that had come to many households and changed them from homes of peace to homes of bitterness and mourning, and forbade festivities, we were still the same slow-going people as before. With me personally no circumstance of magnitude had occurred.

For a year and more I had rejoiced to think and believe that Jeanne loved me. I had naught to fear for the future, and I waited for time and age to bring about the completion of my dream. I dared not make any advances in my case, fearing to make it doubly hard for Jeanne to bear her mother's ire. But when the spring of this year opened and the war had so inter-

fered with the classes at Yale that Gilbert came home, my ease of mind partially left me, for he spent many evenings with Jeanne and her mother, made welcome presumably by the latter, and on account of the Madame's avowed disapproval of me, I worried as to my interests, thinking that Gilbert might, with his persuasive tongue and impressive manner, assisted by the Madame, win Jeanne from me.

As I have already said, the immediate country of our habitation had not held its usual gatherings. Not since the barn-raising bee at Snell's had anything of this nature taken place. During this spring and summer the Congress had built for us a fort, smart and seemly in its proportions. It was built below us and opposite Wormuth's Ford, and had been named Fort Plain. It was necessitated by reason of fear of the savages who under Joseph Brant might perform much slaughter on the outlying farmers, had they no place of rendezvous.

This fort was built of a series of log cabins, arranged around a circle, leaving an interior of about one-third of an acre, with a stockade surrounding it all, while two small cannons capping bastions at different corners defied any who might dispute its occupancy. It furnished a safe and certain place as a harbor for our people in case of attack, and its ample, commodious interior suggested to the mind of Peter Wormuth that a picnic could be, with propriety, held within its interior. He imparted this suggestion to others, and the bad weather of the previous few weeks making

the fort seem a most expedient place, the time was set—a day in the late summer. As usual, the invitation was general, but only those of rebel inclination came, a goodly crowd in spite of that; while those with loyal sentiment, feeling that their presence would be obnoxious, remained at home.

The details of this picnic have no bearing on this tale, and for that reason I will tell of little that transpired. However, I recall that the season had been rainy and cold, that many crops of hay and grain were as yet unharvested, and that the ground in the interior of the fort being heavy and wet, loads of spoiled hay were drawn in and spread about to absorb the water on the ground and furnish good footing.

Although the summer was in its last stage, yet the cold damp of the air made it disagreeable out of doors, and the people kept themselves as much as possible well within the houses. The all-absorbing topic discussed was the war and the Congress, for the actions of the latter were considered important. We had recently heard that his Majesty's government had spurned the offers and demands of that body, and we speculated as to how the Congress would bear this answer and what course they would take.

Late in the afternoon of this day, those who chanced to glance down the river saw a lone horseman riding like mad up the King's highway. On, on, he came. Crossing at the ford, he came directly toward us. As he came closer, some of the more excitable ones ran toward him and vainly shouted, "Why your haste?"

As I gazed upon his fast-approaching figure, I felt instinctively that he bore a message of importance, a message perhaps that we dreaded, and yet might welcome. Straight by them that ran to meet him, he rode, and coming close on, he directed his horse through the aperture of the stockade, and drew rein in front of the crowd, for by the time he had halted all had left the more comfortable confines of the log houses, and had come out to look and listen.

"Greetings," he said, as he dismounted.

"Peace be to you and yours," returned one William Seeber, a patriot of note in the valley.

He laughed a hoarse laugh that sent chills up and down many a spine.

"Right glad would I welcome peace, but methinks it a long way off now. Were this not true, I would not be here. War has been confirmed. 'Tis this that brings me here. CONGRESS HAS DECLARED FOR INDEPENDENCE!"

During this declaration the many faces lengthened perceptibly, and "ahs," "ohs," "can it bes," came in hoarse whispers.

"Yes, 'tis true. I bear you a message from Governor Clinton to this effect. Is Nicholas Herkimer present?"

"Yes," came the answer, as Herkimer advanced and took from the hand of the messenger the note that he had just extracted from his stocking.

"Had a hard time passing the Johnson guard, who wanted to know my mission, but here I am," said he, as

Herkimer opened the message from the governor and proceeded to read it.

We waited anxiously, with bated breath, for him to divulge its contents, knowing that it concerned us. Finally he raised his head and said, "Two things of importance have occurred. The Congress have unanimously declared the independence of the Colonies. Do we approve?"

The cheers, the wild yells, the high-thrown hats of the men and the hearty handclapping of the women gave back the thrilling answer.

"But that is not all," said Herkimer. "The Tryon County Militia, heretofore semi-independent, has already offered its services to the governor. By this document," and he waved aloft a paper, "the governor accepts this service, and now we become an integral part of the colonial militia.

"These are the commissions of the various officers of the Tryon County Militia, including my own as brigadier. Here in Tryon County we may have to cope with a wanton foe. We may in self-defense be called upon to make large sacrifices. Are you willing to do this?"

Again cheers gave the answer.

The messenger seemed well pleased with our manifest patriotism. Before going he called the newly made general aside for consultation; it was evident that he was ascertaining our strength for defense in the event of a possible invasion. This being done, he mounted, spake to his horse, and was gone like the wind.

All watched him for a long way down the river, and none spake until he disappeared from our view behind some trees that lined his path.

Someone murmured "So soon, so soon." 'Twas the signal for the manifest emotions of many. Young men shouted, while those of more years and discretion silently bowed their heads. The women were the most affected, many shedding silent tears, while the children, not understanding, but seeing concern and consternation on the faces of their parents, set up mournful wailings. These evidences of emotion were quickly put aside, and the picnic was brought to a close, as if by one accord.

I had listened to all that had been said by the messenger and by General Herkimer. As I listened to the former and surveyed his large and noble form and face, his defiant gray eye and long unkempt hair, a feeling of awe came over me, and I experienced a desire that I might too, some day, be the bearer of important news, or better still, perform things valiant and worthy of commendation. I have since seen and known the greatest of the continental generals and commanders, but the presence of none ever brought to me half the desire for great achievement as did this commonplace messenger.

Although the "Committee of Safety" had had an existence for some time and the Tryon County Militia had supplanted it, I had not as yet affiliated with either.

CHAPTER X

THE DISCUSSION IN THE KITCHEN

Returning home that evening, I ate my supper in silence. It was not until later that I mentioned to the home-circle the facts of the message the rider of the afternoon had brought. As I have stated, the day was cold and damp, the evening, none the less so, had given ample reason for the order Billy had received from my stepfather, to build a light wood fire on the hearth.

We were seated about the fire, James Hastings and mother directly at its front, Gilbert, who was yet at home, to the right of his father, and I to the extreme left, half lying back in the chimney nook. As I essayed to speak, James Hastings leaned forward and poked the coals with the tongs I handed him, causing the fire to burn up brightly and light the room cheerily, silhouetting in fantastic shapes on the wall beyond the peculiar outline of the curved and carved legs of a table that graced the center of the kitchen, a table that, brought by my grandfather from the Old World, I still retain. He knocked the ashes from his pipe before leaning back in his comfortable rocker, then I said, "The Congress have declared for independence."

"What?" he asked.

I repeated it, and added, "A messenger brought the news to-day as we were at the Fort."

"Fools," he said, "possessors of enthusiasm minus judgment."

I had avoided crossing him heretofore, and even now I did not care for discussion, but hardly could I sit by and hear the representatives of the Colonies called fools, so I answered:

"Speak not so hastily, for things said now may be repeated to you at an inopportune time."

"You think, then, the Colonies will win at war, do you, and then I will regret my words? Well, forget any such notion. His Majesty will never abdicate this soil."

"His armies whipped, why not?" I asked.

"Yes, why not, but are his armies whipped yet? No, and they will not be, boy. They will not be," he nodded his head assuringly.

"Don't be too sure," I said. "With raw provincials our people hemmed in Gates with his vaunted regulars at Boston town."

"A success that has made the Congress, as you call it, mad. Wait, my son, wait and see, but first, turn your sympathies toward the sovereign's side; for mark me, you will scarce have time to turn before the rebellion will have ceased."

Gilbert, who had taken no part in the discussion up to this, then spoke, "This declaration that Congress voted will amount to no more than an old woman's recipe for making soap. In the end not as much, for

soap will always be a necessity, while this wild move of the Colonies will be forgotten within the year."

James Hastings chuckled at his son's wit. "Right, Gilbert, right, and plenty of use will there be for soap after this rebellion is put down, if the rebels wash themselves of all disloyalty ere they present themselves as suppliants to the English throne and ask for mercy." Again he chuckled at his own distortion of Gilbert's hyperbole.

"This valley's folk will have nothing to do with this movement," added Gilbert.

"I should think not," I answered. "From the expression I witnessed to-day, two-thirds of the people between Schenectady and the German Flatts will support Congress."

"I was not speaking of the 'riff-raff,'" he returned. "I meant such people as father, and perhaps the Johnsons of Johnson Hall."

I made no reply to this taunt. It was plain that he meant me to know that he thought me of the class he termed the "riff-raff." Nor was it necessary, for mother, always before neutral in discussions that arose between the speaker and myself, came to my assistance. "What would happen, should this 'riff-raff' possess much fighting ability?"

"Pooh!" he returned, "ability! Show me any around about here who possess what can be termed ability."

"Twenty-five years ago the Crown honored Nicholas Herkimer with a commission. Was it not his ability

they sought to help in conquering the French?" I asked.

"Outside the valley he was never heard of," he answered derisively.

"Then outside this valley some day he shall be well known," I returned; while he smiled contemptuously.

My stepfather turned a thoughtful face toward me.

"Henry, I've hoped that in this controversy you would think as I do, but it is not to be. Before this I had not even heard your mother's opinion. Now I know it but natural that you should think as you do, for why should not she transplant in you traits like unto herself. It has been said that a house divided against itself will fall. Let us hope that this in no way prophesies the ultimate ending of this household."

"If a division should come, it will not be your fault," returned the son to his mildly Tory father. "You have given due notice of the conquering by the royal armies." Uneasily Gilbert shifted in his chair during the interval that followed, as though he hesitated to make a declaration that was in his mind. Finally he added, "I am with the English, and am not afraid so to proclaim. I will bear arms, too, if necessary."

This speech seemed to please the father, for a smile started to efface the seriousness of his expression, but it quickly departed as Gilbert finished his speech about bearing arms. It was a phase of the trouble the father had not reckoned on, and no doubt he dreaded the thought of his son engaging as he had promised.

I cannot say the nature of the incentive that caused my mother to do what she did. It may have been that she wished me to appear none the less brave than Gilbert or it may have been her great love for the land wherein she was born. She turned upon me, her face stern and set. "Come, Henry," she said, "declare yourself. What will you do?"

I thought a moment before I made answer. "You know how I feel about this, of course, and if I understand you rightly, you wish to know if, like Gilbert, I will bear arms. Then let me tell you that to-morrow I join Herkimer's Tryon County Militia. I did not care to inform you of my intention in the presence of those who think differently, yet on your solicitation I am impelled to do so."

When James Hastings had first come to our valley he had borne with him the rifle and knapsack given to him in trust by my father to be brought thence. These had been hanging on iron pegs driven into the chimney over the fireplace ever since this date. As I finished my declaration of intentions, mother took her eyes from me, and shading them with her hands, let her gaze rest upon these mementoes above the fire's light for a moment. Then she arose, and from their hangings where they had been suspended for a quarter of a century, took down, and calling upon me to arise presented them to me. "These were carried by your father years ago. Take them and go wherever you feel that duty calls you."

Not a word did I utter, as I obeyed, taking these em-

blems of a past date and conveying them to my room above, where, after deliberating and gazing upon them for some little time as if to get the meaning of my recently avowed intentions, I retired.

The next day I fulfilled my promise—joined the militia.

CHAPTER XI

GOES WITH HERKIMER TO MEET BRANT

Another winter, bleak and cold, had passed, and the late spring or early summer was with us. Up to this time the Tryon County Militia had not been called together, save for drills, and I am sorry to state that these drills were poorly attended. Many were eager for a time when action might necessitate its being called out. Others argued that it would never see actual service. These did not despair of its necessity, but felt that invasion of our valley by the enemy was impracticable. Discipline was little enforced, and how could it be? We were all neighbors. Strangers had we been, and it were different.

The Great Council of the Five Nations was yet undecided as to their course in the war. The English hoped to effect in them powerful allies against whom our people would quake. While we, too humane to look to them as allies, yet hoped to keep them neutral as far as possible. We knew that effort was being made in this direction, but none expected the Tryon County Militia to figure as a factor in such mediation.

I was surprised one morning in June of the year 1777, that year so especially memorable to me, to hear the tramping of horses' feet near our door, and behold-

ing Colonel Cox of the militia outside to hear him cry out, "VanHorn, VanHorn."

Mother, in the kitchen, displayed a degree of nervousness on seeing the Colonel, for the first time in full uniform, sitting straight on his horse.

I followed her out and was in time to answer, when he asked in a high nasal key for "Mr. Henry VanHorn." Upon seeing me, he said, "The four battalions of the Tryon County Militia are called together at Fort Plain to-morrow morning at seven."

This he had fired point blank at me without the formality of introductory remarks, evidence of his great self-importance.

"Can you furnish anything in the way of provisions?"

I thought of the fine shoats in the sty, and made answer, "I might contribute a hog."

Contemptuously, he said, "A hog cannot be driven."

I looked at mother, inquiringly. She knew what my look meant, and nodded.

"How would a beef cow do?"

"The thing," he said. "It will be called for to-day."

What would James Hastings say to this? But I cared little, for the cattle were mine, and mother had sanctioned my offer.

As Colonel Cox rode away, I turned and looked at mother. Her face was pale. From its ashen whiteness, you could have believed that she had seen hobgoblins that in fantasy rivaled those with whom 'twas

said Paul Manning communed. She murmured, as she passed into the house, "Be ready, my son."

I lay awake that night thinking of my own affairs, and listening to the shouts of militiamen who came from below and from up the river, as they jostled and sang; coming to be in readiness for the work of the morrow.

The next morning, long before the break of day, mother had prepared breakfast for me. Neither Gilbert nor his father had arisen to say adieu and witness my departure. The tears fell from mother's cheeks as she kissed me good-by.

"It is hard to have you go," she said. "Just as your father marched away, now you, carrying the same knapsack and the same rifle, follow him. Where, we do not know."

"But, mother, this going away means but little. While, as you say, I know not whither we are bound, in such times as these, the valley will not long be deserted by its soldiery. Foes are not in proximity, so battle is not imminent. The militia will not long be withdrawn, and thus hazard its own fireside."

As I tried to speak thus reassuringly, she leaned forward, the tears flowing afresh, and fixed the tongue of the buckle more securely in the strap of the knapsack.

"Do you not wish me to go, mother?"

With a Spartan-like mother's courage, the fire flashing from her eyes, she said, "Go, my son, and may God bless the interests of your party. It is hard for

me, who have suffered much from dire war to say it, but GO."

Plainly her sentiments had not been warped by the teachings of her Tory husband. Again I kissed her, hurriedly, and mounting my mare which old Billy was holding outside the door, was gone. 'Twas scarce daylight as I passed the Madame's, and glanced at Jeanne's window. She was not in sight of course at this hour, but I raised my hat in silent appreciation of her who was beyond and inside the pane.

The sun was not yet up as I reached the fort. Upon arriving, I immediately, in company with the newly made lieutenant, Matthew Wormuth, looked up General Herkimer, and we presented our compliments.

"Gentlemen," said he, as he smilingly bowed his acceptance of our good wishes, "I ask you to act as my aides. Will you be pleased to so act?"

"But I am not eligible, General, to act as your aide."

"Oh, I forget," he replied, as he took from his pocket a document and handed it to me. Opening it, I found that it represented in its power of insinuation the provincial convention of the State and certified that I was a non-commissioned lieutenant of the Tryon County Militia. After this we gratuitously acquiesced as he hurried away elsewhere.

Colonel Cox, moving here and there, was busily arranging matters as suited himself.

Young Wormuth asked me, "From whom, think you, Herkimer takes orders?"

"Governor Clinton," I replied.

"Perhaps now, he does, but later from Cox unless he be effectually squelched," said he, as he cast a contemptuous look at this self-conscious officer who was coming toward us.

Was it a prophecy? It must have been so, as two months later proved.

"Boys," said Cox, as he came up, "I have selected you both as my aides. Consider yourself as such then, and subject to my orders."

"Hardly," replied Wormuth, his manner revealing the contempt he bore the speaker. "General Herkimer informed us, only a minute back, that we were to so act under himself."

Cox turned on his heel and abruptly left.

"Why does he need aides?" I inquired.

"He doesn't. What he needs most is an overseer," returned Wormuth.

I laughed heartily, wondering how the dapper Colonel would take it, knowing of the suggestion that he be placed under caretakers.

After details were encompassed, Herkimer mounted his horse and gave notice of the line of march. This being done, he addressed his men thus, "Militiamen of Tryon County, although you are armed, yet this expedition will bear with it letters of peace. Lest the Johnsons might learn of our intentions and frustrate our plans, our mission has been kept secret. God forbid that it shall be misconstrued. I am reliably informed that my one-time friend and neighbor, Joseph

Brant, is congregating an army of the Five Nations at Oghkwaga, on the Susquehanna. Why, and what for, are obvious. Congress, acting through the governor of this province, has requested that I forego any unfriendly converse, using only persuasion in trying to alienate the intentions of Joseph Brant and his army and wean them from the side of the Realm, not to our own, but to one of neutrality. Forward, march."

The line of march, very simple, was as follows: First, the Canajoharie regiment with General Herkimer at its head; then that of the German Flatts, the Mohawks, and the Palatines; some four hundred men in all, followed by negroes driving cattle and horses bearing loads of supplies.

Perhaps two hundred on-lookers had assembled to witness our departure, many women, wives and sweethearts of men of the militia, included. In vain I looked as we passed through the files of these well wishers for Jeanne's face among them, and accounted for her absence only by the interference of her mother.

Down the river we went to Roof's Village, thence turned to the right and followed up the Bowman's Creek, thence by a route that later I learned so well. Cherry Valley was reached that night, and tired and weary I lay me down beside Matthew Wormuth, and despite the fact that it was my first attempt at sleeping out of doors and on the ground, I was in nowise discomfited, for my thoughts were of Jeanne, and that they were thus, assures the reader that they were not unpleasant. During the reverie preceding sleep

my disconnected fancies imagined myself as returning from a bloody battle, covered with scars and the glory that women delight in having their chivalric cavalier encased. I threw myself at her feet—and I was asleep.

Our route lay by Lake Otsego and the Susquehanna River. While passing down the latter and below the Indian settlement at Unadilla, Herkimer sent forward to Brant at Oghkwaga a message-bearer with this information, "Tell him," said Herkimer, "that I desire first, peace, next, to converse with him upon a subject of momentous proportion."

After some parleying that lasted for eight days the preliminaries were settled, and Brant, with some hundred and fifty odd warriors, came near by us and camped. But why these details? Let me only relate a trifling matter that occurred during the interview between Herkimer and Joseph Brant.

It seemed that Brant was obdurate and Herkimer's most persuasive eloquence was lost on him. Brant would make no promise of neutrality, neither would he promise safety for the white settlers upon whom his warriors might come.

Clearly the warpath was his choice.

Colonel Cox, at one of these interviews, thinking to frighten Brant, came forward and said to Herkimer, "Let the damned Indians go. Perhaps annihilation at some near-by date will be more to his liking."

Complacently the tall, elegantly formed Indian chief drew himself to his fullest height, and sarcastically inquired, "Is not he who spoke the son-in-law of old

George Klock?" As he mentioned the name of old George Klock, he pointed at Cox, drew his blanket around him and departed. At the mentioning of this name, the name of a man, who, as Sir William Johnson's under agent, had cheated and maliciously defrauded them, the Indians gave way to screams and warlike gesticulations as they retreated, shouting and brandishing knives and tomahawks, and firing their guns in the air.

Distinctly do I remember feeling my straight, black hair grow more wiry and the *chapeau* it bore elevate, my knees hesitate in the support they gave me, and of hearing Wormuth whisper to me, "Brace up, Van-Horn, you are as pale as Gilbert Hastings."

Involuntarily I recalled my ante-nocturnal fancies of a few nights previous; my backbone stiffened, my hair lay down. What would Jeanne think of her gallant lord had she witnessed his timidity at only a noisy demonstration calculated to frighten? Luckily for him, she was not present.

Thus the conference closed without any definite agreement or result, unless it might be that Brant and his warriors were richer in the possession of a dozen beef cattle that Herkimer had presented as a peace offering.

Preparation was made for the return. The line of march that had experienced difficulties in winding through the wilderness was broken on the return, for we marched in small squads or files, keeping well together in spite of that. In the contingent with myself

there were, besides General Herkimer, Colonel Cox, and Wormuth, some twenty men who ate together and at night slept about the same smudge of pine and damp leaves, thus protected from the millions of mosquitoes. Our route, the same as on going, brought us one night at the junction of the Susquehanna with its source, Lake Otsego. As the evening shadows came on the frogs commenced their bayings, and myriads of fireflies lighted their pantomime lights as they flitted hither and thither over the surface of the water. As I stood and looked out upon this night-scene of beauty, I felt a hand on my arm and heard the voice of Herkimer.

"VanHorn, let us walk this path a little way around the shore."

The path he referred to ran to the west of the lake, and was only a trail, overgrown at that, with briars and interlocking branches. After traversing it some distance, we came to a little clearing that bordered on the water's edge. Here we seated ourselves, as Herkimer spoke.

"Keenly disappointed am I that our mission has proved fruitless. Once turned loose, Joseph Brant and his savage hordes will perform lawlessness that savors of hell more than of war."

"It might have been different," said I, "had not Colonel Cox interposed his unlucky remarks. Some day his rashness may call down upon this militia awful results that cannot be repaired."

"Aye," was the answer. "Colonel Cox, always impetuous. But what you hint at is possible. But

look," said he, stopping the discussion of Cox, "at the calmness with which nature rules her domain. Why cannot man be as peaceful? Note the harmony of the seasons, and the shooting forth of blades of grass apropos to the falling of the spring rains, harmony ruling everywhere. Yon lake, so quiet, like the slumbers of the dead, would that its smooth surface, its mirrored, transparent waters see naught of the war and carnage that now sweeps the land."

"But, General, if the Indians take up the hatchet against us, this country would be the rendezvous from which they would sally out to murder and pillage. To put them to rout would necessarily befoul this country and perhaps these waters with their blood."

"May it never come to pass," he said reverently.

I had interlocked my fingers at the back of my head, and using my hands as a pillow had lain back and was looking up and out at the fireflies, phosphorescent, intermittent gleamings, when all at once my sensibilities seemed changed and a delusion was upon me. Before me lay this same lake, only its waters were raised considerably, and on its surface, clearly outlined, it seemed by those flitting fire torches, phantom-like in appearance, were the forms of boats in such numbers as to cover closely the first mile of its waters; boats filled with soldiers and small arms, cannon and other accouterment of warfare. Momentarily this strange delusion was with me. Swiftly had it come and as swiftly it left, and I was myself again, wondering as to what I had experienced, dumfounded as to its meaning, not

understanding then this strange objective psychic phenomenon in its revelation of unforeseen things. For several days the recollection of this strange event I experienced, then I forgot it entirely.

Two days later we were back at Roof's Village, and forming again the line of march, came up the river. How the fifes and the drums sounded! How proud was I to be in the ranks of this home-protecting militia, and how I hoped that Jeanne would be at the fort to witness our arrival. Although one-half of the populace that had gathered to witness our departure had at the din of the drums and fifes hurriedly come to the fort, yet she was not among them.

Ere we had broken ranks inside the stockade, a figure followed us through the gate and approached the General, who, on seeing the newcomer, dismounted, handed his bridle to me, and, without a word of salutation to the newcomer, put his arm through his and led him to the extreme western end of the stockade, out of earshot of the anxious assembly. A few moments passed when they returned, Herkimer looking grave as he addressed us:

"The newly arrived gentleman is Mr. Thomas Spencer, better known as the Cherry Valley Orator. He has been in Canada for some months past, spying upon the enemy, and has learned that they will undertake the capture of the Hudson Valley. Three divisions of the army will undertake this; the larger one under Burgoyne will descend from Montreal by way of Lake Champlain, another force will ascend the Hud-

son Valley from New York, and the third is composed of regulars, Indians, and the Tories that have escaped northward from our valley. A certain Barry St. Leger, a brigadier-general in the service of George of Great Britain, as leader of this band of robbers, murderers, and traitors, is to sweep through this valley of ours, wherein we live, have reared our families and buried our dead, carrying all before him and joining the other divisions at Albany. We, as the protectors of these sacred precincts, shall interfere. The militia entire will gather in the near future at the German Flatts, preparatory to an effort to resist the onslaught of these desecrators."

CHAPTER XII

HENRY ASKS FOR JEANNE'S HAND

The harvest of this year, while abundant, was late. This lateness of the ripening of grain and hay had caused much uneasiness on the part of all interested, for we knew not when the dreaded St. Leger would swoop down upon us, or we would be called away to stop his progress, and so we hurried, lest these things might occur and the harvest would be left to crinkle and finally mold to the mother earth, instead of giving sustenance to man and beast. We worked early and late, in anticipation of either event, hoping to save almost, if not quite, all.

Old Billy, Punk, and myself, and, on my own solicitation, Paul Manning, with James Hastings occasionally, were making heroic efforts toward the gathering of the hay and cereals that grew on our estate.

Across the river we could see Peter Wormuth and his negroes busily undertaking the same task; the son Matthew was with a small portion of the militia that were quartered at Fort Dayton at the German Flatts, the place that later was to be the rendezvous of the whole army.

Nearly every day someone passing down would spread the rumor that the army of the opposition was

steadily marching headlong toward the upper end of the valley. Whence originated these rumors I do not know, but question if they were the result of authentic reports. Such news was passed on from one to another, and like the ripples on the water, grew broader and lost themselves, to be followed by another. However, they spurred us on to renewed efforts in our undertaking.

The land lying back on the higher portion of the farm had been cleared of its growth, and now there only remained to gather the hay on the bottom lands bordering the river. Its great height and heft of stalk and fiber made it a tedious undertaking. Because it represented the last of the harvest, and if nothing threatening was then imminent a play-spell would follow its finish, with patience and renewed zeal did we set about the task. From our position in this lot we were in full sight of the river, the King's highway beyond its borders, and also the Madame's house; in fact, this lot mentioned lay just to the north, or between her home and the river.

From the corner of my eye, lest I be detected by the others, I had watched Jeanne, as she had come out each morning, scissors in hand, and clipped dahlias, pansies, and roses, and sitting down, arranged them in bouquets as suited her taste; or when the sun was a few hours past the meridian and the cool of the day commenced, she and her mother would come out under the vine that hovered about the arbor, and there her hands flew as they worked upon finery that rested in her lap.

Gilbert had never assisted in any labor, and could not be expected to do so now. He was using his time in reading, sleeping, and yawning, or mayhap powdering his hair, a new departure for him. At all events, he was doing as he felt was becoming to a gentlemanly, well-dressed young man of his day.

While at work in the aforementioned field one day, just having finished sharpening the scythe and making ready to strike in and lay the swath that led the others across the lot, I heard peals of laughter floating toward me. Glancing up I beheld Gilbert seated outside with Jeanne and her mother, he gesticulating, and, I imagined, showing his white, even teeth, as he smilingly told them the story or experience that had caused Jeanne to nearly scream with pleasure, and her mother to laugh so loudly that the next sound wave following the one that bore Jeanne's silvery laugh bore that of her mother's harsher tones.

It was then that two stern propositions confronted me, and the knowledge that, by either, I could lose Jeanne. First, if I were called away with the militia, Gilbert would be her undisputed suitor; second, if I remained and was inactive, he might woo her from me, while I looked on.

I felt somewhat the importance of my position as a lieutenant in the militia, non-commissioned though it were, and if brave things were expected, nay exacted, from one holding this position, why should he not be brave enough to lay siege upon the fortress of a woman's heart. I would delay no longer, the time for

action was at hand. Now I would know my fate, the Madame should hear me in my own behalf. This very evening would I beard the lion in his den, as it were. I would tell the Madame frankly that I loved her daughter, and respectfully petition that I might be allowed to wed her. My ardent love lent confidence to my proposed suit, and I assured myself that I would win. Under the stimulus of my own confidence, I fairly flew as I laid the dank, tangled grass low on my way across the field. Across, and I looked back to behold the others but one-half the way through. My physical powers had also been stimulated.

Old Billy bawled out, "Mars Henry, who you racin' wid?"

"With my thoughts," I answered, and waited for them to come up.

Looking again toward the Madame's, I beheld Jeanne spreading a white cloth on a small table that Gilbert, presumably on her invitation, had brought from the house. She went inside and returned bearing eatables in her hands for the luncheon of which these three were to partake.

Let me again digress from the principal part of this chapter long enough to state that James Hastings, although a Tory at heart and in sentiment to the very core, yet kept a closed mouth regarding his convictions, and few knew of them. I doubt if the Johnsons themselves, who organized the Tory horde that fled to Canada, the same that were now coming back with St. Leger, knew his sentiment. As to Gilbert, supposedly,

like his father, yet outside of what he had stated of his intentions, at the time when the matter was up for family discussion, the time when mother had presented me with the rifle and knapsack of my father's, I had heard him say naught of the contest; yet he had made no effort to participate.

It was near the hour of sundown, that not unwelcome notification of the supper hour, the time when labor is left to itself, that the deductions regarding my immediate course as to my love affair were reached.

Supper dispatched, leaving the milking of the cows, the feeding of the horses and oxen to the others, I made a shift of my work garments to some of more presentable appearance. Of late, I had paid more attention to the dressing of myself, and while I in no way approached Gilbert's gorgeousness of apparel, yet I flattered myself that I did not, when in my best, resemble a "busher," as before I had experienced this desire for semi-finery. Here let me confess that this newly developed weakness of mine was not actuated by reason of a desire for foppishness, but, on the contrary, I had improved the details of my dress only that I might appear less loutish in Jeanne's eyes.

I knew that in choosing this evening to settle the conclusions made in the afternoon, I would encounter Gilbert at the Madame's, yet this in no way deterred me. Once started, I could not stop. This matter had been so long before me that once my courage expanded, my mind fixed as to the proper course, there was to be no backing down.

When the Frenchman had moved his family into our valley and erected his home, among the furnishings brought up the river was a spinet. There was none other like it in the valley that I knew of. Jeanne had learned to play fairly well upon its ivory keys, and as I drew near her home this evening I heard her singing an old ballad, her voice mingling with the rich basso of Gilbert's, accompanied by the sharp twangings of the spinet.

On a previous occasion, when invited to this home, its occupants entertaining friends from New York at the time, I had admired the slim, white hand that wandered over the keys of the harpsichord; and now my blood surged as I thought that another was looking at and admiring that same slim white hand. Softly their voices in unison floated out to me.

My footfalls silenced the song, and Jeanne came to the door in anticipation of someone's approach.

"Why, it's Lieutenant Henry," she said, as she gave me her hand. Ah, that hand, reassuring in its possession! I loosed it and followed her inside.

My reception was genial from the Madame, and even Gilbert let drop the sarcasm that always marked his speech toward me. Indeed, the Madame remarked as I entered about my visits being so far between, and I hoped from these assurances that she had changed in the aversion that she felt for me. She inquired as to how we got on with the harvest and as to its proportions, and finally asked:

"How like you to be a soldier?"

My answer was in the affirmative.

"Well, my wishes are with the Crown, but should St. Leger come through the valley, I hope to know of his approach in time to depart thence."

"I shall assist," said I, "in arresting his progress."

At this, Gilbert arose to go. It was plain that he would not risk a quarrel by staying.

We were in the family living-room, at the front of which was a small parlor; from this parlor a door opened to a small stoop, or porch, in front. This porch was not connected with the one over the entrance through which I had entered. As Gilbert arose to go the Madame mentioned that she had read with pleasure the book he had loaned her, and she would trouble him to carry it home rather than return it herself. She entered this room, or parlor, as mentioned, and he followed her therein and closed the door behind him, and directly they engaged in a low conversation.

"Jeanne," I hoarsely whispered, as I arose and pressed toward her, reaching for her hand which she drew back, "I love you dearly. Uncouth and backward though I am, I have come to ask your mother for your hand."

She drew back a little, and her face blanched as white as the kerchief she applied to it.

"Lovest thou not me a little, Jeanne?" Hesitatingly I implored—"say it, my own."

She opened her lips to speak, but no words came. Her throat worked, but no articulation was audible. Her eyes, ah, they told what her lips could not say,

that there was another who bade her bow at his shrine, and there could not be two. Which? Did she know now? Was she now sure? Had I waited too long before making this declaration? But deep down in my heart rested a conviction that her hesitancy was occasioned by coercion and fear.

"Jeanne," I again entreated, "why hesitate? Once you gave me reason to believe that you loved me."

I again tried to take her hand, but before I had finished the last sentence, before I could withdraw my own hand, so as to conceal its purpose, the door opened, the keen eye of the Madame swept the room, and her penetration divined at once my intention. She had let Gilbert pass out the other door, unheard by us, and had returned to observe me in my attempts at love-making. If her eye was keen, her voice was even keener, as she spoke.

"Henry VanHorn, what meanest this?"

I was silent, not knowing how to reply.

"Jeanne," she called, "speak up."

"It means only this," said I—"Madame, I love Jeanne. I have just told her so. I hope she loves me in return."

Her answer was a grating laugh that sent all hope from my breast.

"You!" she said, on getting her breath. "Think you I would wed Jeanne to such an one? When she marries it will be to one suited to her better than you, one above a hesitating country lout."

I winced. Again that laugh.

She continued, "Less than a week ago, Gilbert, manly that he is, asked me for Jeanne's hand. I gave him my consent."

I staggered, and in reply only murmured his name, "Gilbert."

"Yes," said she, "Gilbert, and were he not a suitor for my daughter's hand, I would object to a low-born Dutchman as a husband for Jeanne."

Low-born Dutchman, indeed! I, a lineal descendant of a family who had contributed an hundred lives in the name of religious liberty to the Inquisition, great grandson of an office-holder and friend of the great Dutch Governor Stuyvesant, and son of a father who had given his life in the cause of a country that all true Dutchmen now hated.

She continued, "Three years ago, as he was leaving for college, he asked my consent to tell Jeanne of his love. I gave it, but bade him wait for age to ripen her sentiment. Then did he show me a miniature of himself that he expected to give her. Now she wears that minature over her heart."

Jeanne had been softly crying since her mother entered, but as the mother spoke of this minature she uttered an anguishing "Oh, oh," and sank into a chair.

"By her choice, Madame, wears she it, or through fear of you?"

"By her choice."

"Were you a man, I would denounce that declaration as a lie," I managed to say as I stumbled from the room.

Outside, I started down the river, wandering I knew not nor cared not where. Till near morn I roved, now walking slowly in deep meditation, then quickening my pace to my thoughts, muttering like one gone mad, stopping at the river's edge, daring to fling my mortal self into its inviting waters, stopping and crying, "Jeanne!" "Jeanne!" until I silenced the nighthawk and myself, as the echo of my wild cry came back to me. Soliloquy was useless, for it brought me back to the same point whence I started.

So this was to end my dream, my hopes; hopes that had been many days a-building, and were now cut down by mean, cruel words.

Gilbert—ah, I scarce blamed him. He was no more selfish in this matter than I, but did he love her as I did?

No, no, he could not. It was not his nature.

Life would be a hard reality now. Life, ah, would there be anything in it worth experiencing after this?

I was retracing my steps, and had wandered back to the ford when my attention was arrested by the sound of horses' feet coming down the opposite bank of the river. A moment, and the horse was in the river, across, and near me. I drew back, but not soon enough to hide my figure.

"Who are you, sir?" the horseman called out.

I gave my name.

"And you, sir?"

"A messenger from the German Flatts."

"What brings you here?"

"St. Leger has invested Fort Stanwix. By order of Brigadier Herkimer, I am notifying the delinquent residue of the militia to gather on the morrow at Fort Dayton. Make haste." So saying he turned and retraced his steps across the ford, while I, with a springing step, retraced my way home.

Here, there was a way out. I might in the coming contest be killed. I hoped I would. It would be a convenient exit from my trouble. I would expose myself unnecessarily; even invite the grim monster, dare him, taunt him, until in sheer vindication he would snatch me to himself.

Hurrying home, I went to the slaves' quarters, aroused old Billy, told him I was going away, as the militia was called out. I explained why and told him to tell mother I had been called from the house by a militiaman while the others were sleeping, and for him, Billy, with Paul Manning and Punk, to finish the hay-curing. The old fellow broke down and cried like a baby.

"Billy," I said, "compose yourself. Why worry about me?"

"If you air dun killed, I will neber hab no pig no more. Dey," meaning my people, "would forgit it."

In spite of my great disappointment and my heavy heart, I laughed. Billy worrying more for the absence of a pig in his pen each year, than for me.

"You may tell mother," I said, "that in case I do not return to carry out my wishes, and give you a pig every season."

He heaved a great sigh as I left him.

Stealthily I crept into the house, and to my room, procured a change of clothing, descended, climbed astride my steed, and was away.

Already the gray streaks of dawn were breaking into long white blades as I left. But they of the militia at Fort Dayton were only breakfasting as I arrived.

Poor beast, I had, lost to myself, sent my mare over a distance that, as the crow flies was more than twenty miles, without a let-up in the fast gallop.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RENDEZVOUS AT FORT DAYTON

A goodly portion of the militia were assembled before this final call. A small guard had been left when we returned from the visit to Joseph Brant, and as the danger augmented this guard had grown in proportion, and now some eight hundred men were assembled at Fort Dayton, and the road east in this sultry morning of August was black with footmen and men ahorse, all the earlier hours of the day.

Diversified and amusing was the dress of these men; some in their best, including linsey dotted waistcoats, high stock, and tie. Others, thinking that war meant more than a dress parade, wore their working clothes of home-spun. Some had taken the middle course, and wore, perhaps, a long coat and high boots, while the majority wore buckskin breeches, and were devoid of either coat or vest.

I tied the mare to a young elm sapling at the edge of the church yard, this last place being opposite the entrance to the fort. On my way across the bridge that spanned the water-filled lagoon, surrounding and outside of the stockade, I met with Matthew Wormuth, who was then on his way out to execute some orders from the general.

Cheerily he saluted me, "Well met. The General asked for you not five minutes ago; but, heavens, how you look with your bloodshot eyes and haggard face! What means it?"

"The trip was hard on me," I replied, "and little enough sleep has contributed in knocking me out somewhat."

"I should say so," said he, as he again surveyed me.

"Have you breakfasted yet?"

"No."

"Well, then, hurry up; the General is eating now. He will welcome you to his board."

"I am not hungry," I said, as I started off.

"Well this is queer, no appetite and looking as though you had eaten nothing for a week. Tut, man, not afraid of the much-vaunted Barry, are you, or his renegades and Indians?"

"No," I replied, "I am not afraid of all the troops Barry St. Leger ever commanded. Kill one is all they can do, and there are things worse than that."

He looked crestfallen. He had recently married Miss Shoemaker, who was the niece of General Herkimer, and happy in the first blush of wedded existence, life held many charms for him.

"What?" he asked, as though surprised.

"Living," I replied, as I resumed my course through the gate of the stockade and past squads of men busy, some preparing and others eating their breakfast. In fact, the whole enclosure inside the stockade and surrounding the fort was filled with the din of utensils

and the forms of men. Entering the fort, I inquired for the commander, and was shown to a room at the back of the fort wherein he sat at his egg and coffee.

Greeting me, he looked at my wan face inquiringly, but did not mention that he noticed it.

"Have you had aught to eat this morning, Van-Horn?"

"Yes," I said, "plenty," lest the scene of a few moments before might be reënacted.

Hurriedly he finished his meal, then spoke:

"Although you are an officer in name only, yet as a neighbor I feel frank to tell you my plans. First, I hope the enemy know nothing of our intentions. That they have scouts out that will report the crystallizing of the militia is probable. Knowing this, and of the garrison at Fort Stanwix, they may retreat. If they do not, I believe that a concentrated attack is desirable. Colonel Cox thinks differently."

"Pardon," said I, "Colonel Cox may think wrongly; his impetuous nature makes his advice undesirable, and besides, Brigadier, I believe him jealous of you. I believe, sir, that could he supplant you in command, his greatest desire would be satisfied."

He thought a moment, and as if hearing not what I had said regarding Cox, he continued:

"He thinks it best to attack at once, deeming it impossible to notify Gansevoort, at Fort Stanwix, of our presence, arguing it trivial to wait for the garrison to assist. What think you?"

"The combined forces would assist in victory."

"This course shall I follow," he added, "provided scouts can be obtained to carry a message to Ganse-voort."

Here he detailed to me his plans. We were to march west, fording the river at old Fort Schuyler, where since the thriving village of Utica has grown, and pushing forward to the Indian village of Oriska, or as it has best been known to history—Oriskany.

The scouts were to proceed, if possible, to Fort Stanwix and notify its commander of our presence and intentions; the garrison was to make ready for an immediate sally. Once this preliminary completed, three cannon shots were to be fired to signalize their readiness. Both parties were immediately to advance and give battle.

"What think you of the plan?" he finished.

"It is concise and practical, but should these scouts fail?"

"Then others shall attempt the task. The fort must be reached."

"General Herkimer, your position as commander makes what I am to say sound impertinent. Let us, as you suggested a few moments ago, forget this difference of rank and meet as neighbors."

"We are nothing if not neighbors," was the assuring reply.

"What I wish to say is simple. May you let nothing deter you in the carrying out of the plans you have decided upon."

"You are thinking of Cox," he said simply. "I

thank you for the suggestion, but nothing shall change my purpose."

He arose, as he requested me to inform the officers of the companies to form the line of march and make ready to depart as soon as this was done.

The hour of eight arrived, and we were in motion.

As I rode along a little behind and to the left of Herkimer, Wormuth being at his right, there came to me a silent meditation of the proceedings of the previous night. I had tried to brace up under the stimulus of approaching battle and had succeeded in my undertaking fairly well. But now, with nothing to deter me but the occasional commands of Colonel Cox to the rustics to keep in line as the army moved along, the bitterest of recollections came to me, and I prayed for deliverance from my thoughts and the future.

In the end a light broke upon me. Herkimer had said that scouts were to be dispatched to Fort Stanwix could any brave enough to attempt passing the enemy's line be secured. Here was the chance for me. I would go as one and hoped I might never return.

Toward the time of the sunset we had reached the place of Oriska, the place where the Oneidas at one time had a settlement. Our dinner had we eaten in a hurry a few miles back.

"Halt!" commanded the general.

Each battalion stopped.

"Face about!

"Before we break ranks," continued he, as he rode down the line, halting at about its center, "let me say

that between us and yon garrison lies the strong, double picket of the enemy—two lines of Indians that entirely encompass the fort. A combined attack is desirable, nay, is insistent, but before this can be, the garrison must be reached and notified. It is a perilous undertaking, I will ask no one personally to attempt it. Instead, who will volunteer to go? Three are needed."

I hastily dismounted and tethered my mare. This being finished, I stepped forward.

"I will go, sir, for one."

Adam Helmer, from the German Flatts, whom I well knew, pronounced the same words as I had.

"Another one is needed," said the brigadier.

A bulky form, from no one seemed to know where, stepped before the general.

"Me, too, soir," the stranger said.

Herkimer scrutinized him a moment, then gave orders to break ranks and make camp for the night.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BATTLE AT ORISKANY

That evening, while walking about the camp, paying little attention to those around me, too busy with my own thoughts to hold converse with any save the innermost communion with myself, and while passing a supply wagon around which were seated Colonels Visscher, Cox, and another, I heard such imprecations as "His Tory brother," "Coward," "Half Tory himself," "Watch him" coming from this group.

I drew near, if possible to hear more, and to learn to whom these epithets were being applied, when Cox saw me and hushed the others. Could it be that they were talking of Herkimer, and if he was meant? Then my suspicions, as told to Herkimer, in the morning, of Cox's jealousy, and a desire to supplant him in command, were corroborated by that gentleman and his friends. I said naught to any of what I had heard; I had warned Herkimer before and that would suffice. Besides, it little behooved me, a young commissioned subaltern, to advise one superior against another.

Going back whence I started to the place which Herkimer had chosen where he and his relatives would spend the night, I found them seated about; Herkimer, his brother George, his two brothers-in-law, Peter Bel-

linger and George Bell, and his nephew by marriage, Matthew Wormuth.

They were discussing the battle of the morrow.

Strange contrast, thought I. Here the general and his relatives are worrying lest the scouts may not reach the fort, planning the outcome should they reach it or not, while out a little way from there, dissenters, claiming to be patriots, are discussing and planning an intrigue against their commander.

"I am sorry to have you go on this perilous trip," the general said as I came up. "It's hazardous; let someone go in your stead."

"Why another? Are others more capable?"

He laughed a short laugh that died away as he remarked:

"'Tis like you Dutchmen; once your mind is made up nothing can change you. You are to start at midnight, the others, your companions, are so notified. Try and get some sleep. We will call you a little before the time you are to start. I may not see you when you depart." He half extended his hand toward me, then withdrew it.

I understood. He did not expect to see me again.

Impulsively he had extended his hand and withdrew it lest I might know his thoughts. I thereupon extended my hand to him; he took it, pressed it firmly, and turned away. In spite of the tauntings of the mosquitoes, of the battle presumably of the morrow, of the undertaking that was but a few hours off, and in spite of bitter experiences of the night previous, tired nature

after being outraged for forty-eight hours forgot the pangs of the body, the remorse of the mind, and I slept immediately I had stretched my six feet of humanity on the earth.

Four hours later—it seemed but four minutes—I was awakened by the hearty shake of a brawny hand on my shoulder, and looking up beheld the burly one, whom I recalled was to be one of my companions, bending over me.

"The hour is midnight," he said, his Irish brogue evident.

We started at once, by bearing down toward the river's bank. Along the water we expected to trudge until opposite the fort; then turning to the left make a break for its domain. Started, and we found our course a difficult one to follow. Loose bogs and marsh holes made sure footing impossible. Tangled arbutus and ivy had to be avoided, lest we trip in their ensnaring vines and fall. Alluring plains or small bodies of cattails, whose evenness of tops beguiled one in believing them open lots were before us, and to add to these discomforts countless hordes of mosquitoes and flies came out to see who invaded their domain, and to make him who was that bold to suffer for the invasion.

One hour passed, we had scarce gone a mile, not a word had been spoken between us three. All felt that silence harbored safety.

Two hours, three, and four. The morning's light could soon be seen above us through the tangled tree-tops. We had expected to reach the fort before day-

light, so that the signal guns could be fired early in the morning. Now it was daylight, and we were but little more than half way. Further on and the breaking of a twig caused us to draw a short breath, and each jumped behind trees that protected us from the direction whence the sound came.

Then, thought I, why should I protect myself, I, who wish to die? I stepped forth and started on, my companions doing likewise.

Bang! went a rifle, and a bullet buried itself just over my head in a tree at my right.

"Come on," I said to my companions, breaking silence for the first time.

We ran boldly forward, I taking no advantage of the protection afforded me, while my companions sped from tree to tree, from one clump of pine brush to another. It was evident that our adversaries were not yet close upon us. "They're Injuns," the huge Irishman hissed, as we flew on.

The occasional firing was coming closer, was bearing toward us from the left. We veered to the right to keep a safe distance between us. We had not gone far when their reason for crowding us toward the river became apparent; we trying to bear away from it, to avoid marshes and secure better footing; and now their close proximity had pushed us back again toward the river. Soon there opened up before us a small clearing of some few acres, one side of which, bordering on the river, forbade our making progress any further northward.

It was easy now to understand why they had not attacked us at closer range. The rifle shots had been mainly to steer us northward rather than to do us damage at present. They wished to run us broadside before them in this clearing, where they could shoot us down, as I have seen done many times when rabbits were released from life-traps and given a chance to run before the hunter.

Now we were at the clearing's edge. There was no other way out but to run before the fire. I took position at the left of my companions and toward the enemy, and we were started.

"Are you trying to protect us?" asked Adam Helmer.

"The fort must be reached; one of us must live," I answered between my breath.

My, how the bullets rained around us!

"There goes the heel of my boot," I heard from the Irishman.

In running I carried my rifle in the right hand and at each stride swung my hand backward and forward. In one of those oscillations forward I felt a sudden sting and pain in it. Glancing down, I saw that a bullet had passed through the fleshy part back of the minor finger. As if these two close shots were signals for increased speed, we let out a faster pace.

The intense heat was so excessive that in walking through the close wood, where not a breath of air stirred the leaves, the perspiration started from every pore; but as we ran, great drops like rain flew from my

face, ran down my elbow and smarted my wound like nettlerash, gathered in my eyes and made my vision so uncertain that I ran directly into a mammoth pine tree stump, and rebounded prostrate on my back at its base.

Demoniacal cheers floated to our ears from across the clearing, and the stump immediately above me showed instantly a dozen bullet holes in its blackened exterior.

"For God's sake, spring to your feet and run, man!" exclaimed Helmer.

On my feet, and I jumped a good four yards the first move, as a rattle of musketry was heard and the bullets sang behind me. A minute more and we crossed the balance of the clearing and into the wood on its western border.

"Eight o'clock," so the dispatches I bore said was the hour set for the combined attack, and it was now past nine. What would Herkimer think? Would they persuade him to make the attack alone? No, I had his word to the contrary.

Soon, as we walked along, wiping rivers of sweat from our faces and fanning them with our hats, we observed that we were again to emerge into a large clearing, the one wherein lay the fort.

As we emerged from the wood the guard at the fort saw us, and soon a small party of men under Colonel Willet came out to meet us.

"Who are you, sirs?" said the colonel.

"Scouts, bearing an express from General Herkimer to Colonel Gansevoort."

"Advance. Whence came all the firing back yonder?"

"Injuns tried to stop us," said the Irishman of our party.

My message could not wait for visiting, so I insisted on pressing forward to the fort, that was nearly a mile distant. Suddenly a roar sounded to the east of us, and at our back.

"Can it be thunder?" I asked. Sultry it was and foreboding of a storm, but thunder seldom comes when so few thunder clouds are visible as then lined the sky.

Colonel Willet stopped, looking about him as if uncertain. It sounded again.

"Yes, it is thunder," said he.

We heard this ominous roar several times, as we proceeded forward.

Entering the fort, I gave the dispatches to Colonel Gansevoort, who read them carefully.

"You understand what the message bears?" he asked me.

"Perfectly."

"It is a good plan," he added. Turning to Colonel Willet, he said:

"Have three cannon fired at intervals of a minute, while I summon the garrison, which you will command. Be ready to start at once."

The garrison was drawn up inside the enclosure, one-third its men counted off, and assembled in marching order. The gate of the causeway was opened, but before the command to march was given, a heavy peal

of unmistakable thunder rang out, followed in a moment by a roar that seemed different in its character, the vibrations of which I recognized as the same that we had heard some thirty minutes before.

"That's the roar of musketry," sang out Willet. "Herkimer has attacked the enemy without waiting for us. Forward, march! Double quick!"

Suiting his action to his command, he spurred his charger; it sprang forward and the men fell in.

Cox had succeeded in urging Herkimer to battle, I thought, even though he promised not to deviate from his course as planned. Extenuating conditions must have been the necessity which caused him to alter his plans.

The continued roar of musketry, silenced to our ears occasionally by the heavy vibrations of nature, ceased as the rain broke on us. Before the leaders of our party had passed over the causeway, large drops were falling, then a little hail, and finally a deluge of water, a deluge so great as to cause the trained and hardened soldiers to wince as they faced it, and at the command of Willet, "Break ranks," to run helter-skelter back inside and under the protecting roof of the fort. For a good thirty minutes it surged, then ceased as suddenly as it had come, leaving the little hollows of the ground full of water, the twigs of the trees and bushes along the route we were to take heavy and wet to slap our faces, and the footing of leaves underneath slippery and uncertain.

The ranks had hardly been reformed when the sun

shone forth, and with it came the renewed sound of musketry, punctuated occasionally by a cannon's boom.

"The battle is resumed," shouted Willet. "Forward, men. March!"

The camp of the enemy, with several companies in reserve from which they expected to draw reinforcements, lay between us and the place whence came the sound of battle, St. Leger having sent forward regular troops and the Indian allies, followed later by the reinforcements of Johnson's Greens; himself, with the balance of his army, remained in camp. Straight toward this camp the intrepid Willet led. So surprised was the commander that he retreated across the river to the northward.

Leaving Willet busily engaged in carting back the stores and ammunition left by the retreating army, Helmer, the bulky Irishman, and myself circuiting southward and east for a good five miles, hastened forward toward the glen, from which came awful death yells, mingled with war whoops and the shouts of commanders, rising above the din and noise of musketry.

As we neared the ravine wherein our own militia had been ambushed, plainly I heard the voice of Herkimer, clarion-like in its clearness, "Place two men behind a tree."

"The Indians are rushing in and scalping the lone man behind a tree before he can reload," said Helmer.

He who had been our companion of the morning quickly raised his rifle and fired. A shout and he was gone toward the body of a skulking Indian. Pell-mell,

we followed him. Heavens! He had out with his knife and ripped off the scalp of the warrior he had killed.

Bang! a bullet whizzed between Helmer and me. Rapidly I ran forward, and as another warrior, his gun now empty and useless, ran toward the field of action, I fired. He leaped high in the air and fell dead, and the man with us took his scalp before the death gurgle had left him.

We came forward to the edge of the ravine, and at a point to the right and above the enemy, whence we could only fire at them occasionally, and in no danger ourselves except from the Indians who might have quitted the severe action before us, and finding our track, come up at our backs. Unable to reach our own ranks, we were forced to look on, and to be spectators of the latter part of the most awful and horrible slaughter, considering the number of men engaged, that Revolutionary annals record.

We saw the Royal Greens under Walter Butler picking their way through the underbrush below, and to our left, toward the remnant of our own army. Broadside on they met, these opposing factions, composed on one side of the true patriotic defenders of their own valley; the other made up of escaped Tories, former friends and neighbors they were, who had fled the valley to Canada after the death of Sir William Johnson, and now returning sought the lives of those they might have held dear in the past.

As they sighted each other, like wolf dogs they flew together.

My companions and I, creeping to the edge of the ravine, looked down on a scene at which, now at this late day, my heart sickens, my blurred vision again beholds, and in fancy my nostrils again sniff the scent of blood as I write its horrible details.

The forces of hell seemed released. Demons they were, these militiamen and those Royal Greens in their eagerness to slay one another.

I surveyed these scenes, too much engrossed to take part had not the precipitous bank prevented. Not so the Irishman. With the stealth of an Oneida long trained as to delicacy of footfalls, he crept feet foremost, lying half back on his shoulders, down the sharp decline in front, and unnoticed swung his hatchet and took the scalp of two regulars who were among those that had given way for Butler's rangers and were now looking on as we were. A moment and he was back beside us, and whispered in my ear, "I couldn't stand by without taking a hand."

Now the combatants were surging, first to the right and then to the left. Mutual glances of recognition were followed by cries of vengeance as two men, perhaps former neighbors, would meet.

As the combat waged closer, I beheld the struggle of two men, who having in the close personal encounter dropped their guns, were struggling as they rolled over and over in a small slough-pool, each holding a knife aloft in his released hand, the other clasped about his opponent's neck, waiting for the vantage point when he might deal death to the other, when the knife would

descend. As their faces came uppermost and toward me, I recognized them. They were brothers whose names I might mention but will not. The larger and more powerful one raised himself on his elbow and dealt the other a death blow over the heart.

"Damn you!" I heard the larger one screech, as the blow descended. Trying to get away, forgetting that the other, though mortally wounded, was yet desperate, he rolled slowly from his embrace.

Quickly the keen edge of the other's knife ran along his gullet; he fell forward and expired, locked in the death embrace of his brother, his life-blood flowing into the upturned face and dyeing the pool wherein both had met their death. Sentiment, indeed, was strong when one would kill his brother, who thought differently from him.

It was only possible for us to see a little of the struggle that was taking place in front, the forest's tangled twigs and foliage interfering, but I have not forgotten the scene I have just described nor another. A stately young officer of the enemy had been separated from his fellow men and surrounded by several of our own militia. Spurring his charger forward, before a shot could be fired he rode down two of those in front, when his escape seemed assured, for in front lay the corduroy road that gave footing and would facilitate his escape. Again spurring his horse, he leaped him high over a bush clump. In mid-air his course was arrested; two bullets pierced the side of the steed and he floundered, plunged, and rolled headlong a good two

rods to the right into the brackish, murky waters of the slough. Instead of gaining the roadway and freedom, the officer lying under his horse amidst the slime and tadpoles was crushed and drowned by the weight of the horse as he thrashed about in his death agonies.

"Oonah, Oonah!" was echoed suddenly through the underbrush. "They run, they fly!" a hundred voices echoed from across the ravine, for it was the retreating cry of the Indians. Below we could see them scurrying back, followed closely by the regulars and the Greens, each seeming to be endeavoring to outdo the others in his haste. The battle had ceased as suddenly as had the rain of an hour previous.

By reason of our position, a position partially behind the enemy, my companions, through danger of detection, could fire but an occasional shot as opportunity offered. As for myself, the occurrences of the brief space that I had been an onlooker during the closing moments of this awful death struggle had so impressed me and held my attention that I could not have been otherwise than an onlooker had our position been more advantageous; had we been in the ranks with our friends instead of being where carefulness was a factor to be observed and where detection would have meant instant death.

We slid down the bank and reached the corduroy road. Passing along it, we came upon the scene the noise of which we had heard, but only had we witnessed a small portion. Stepping carefully, lest we might walk on the dead and dying, our ears deafened and hearts

torn by the cries of the wounded who plaintively asked for assistance or water, I beheld a son of my neighbor, Jacob Nellis. He had sunk into the bog at the left of the bridge, the bridge that joined the road leading into the ravine. The waters and soft ooze were slowly claiming him their victim, as they sought to engulf him. His head was yet above the water.

"Henry," he murmured, as he saw me, "for God's sake, give me water!"

I emptied the contents of my canteen down his throat before I extricated him from his position. His body was half under water, the lower part, as I supposed, invisible in the muddy bog. I raised him out and laid him on the bridge. Heavens! the lower parts of both limbs were completely gone; shot away by musketry, he told me. When he was as comfortable as I could make him, he implored me to leave and go on to others, for, said he, "Others with care may live, while I cannot."

With reluctance did I leave him, and passed through irregular rows of the dead and wounded, and climbed up the roadway along the opposite bank, down which our little band had marched that morning. I noticed the mangled bodies of horses, the trees punctured with a thousand bullet holes, the twigs exhibiting bare and ragged ends instead of leaves, while saplings in some cases had actually been cut down by the terrific musketry.

As I picked my way through the tangled mass of slain humanity and outraged nature, I came upon the

form of Colonel Cox, lying full on his back beside his horse, his mouth open, his eyes staring up but not seeing. A bullet hole over his heart, from which his life-blood had poured, showed the cause of his death.

"Died virtually by his own hand," said the voice of Matthew Wormuth near me.

"Not suicide?" I inquired.

"No," thundered Wormuth, "but by insults and accusations of cowardice and Toryism he so enraged General Herkimer that he gave the order to advance before the signaling guns from the fort, although his judgment told him better. Colonel Cox is responsible for his own death. How," he continued, "could Herkimer, being a man, withstand such insults? He told him that you would never reach the fort, that waiting for the signal was useless. It would never come."

Here Wormuth smiled a grim sort of a smile, as he bent over the dead form of the man he blamed for the premature attack, an attack during which he had fallen at the first fire. Continuing, he said:

"Herkimer told Cox that he, in the event of a surprise, would be first to fly. It was a true prophecy. See! The bullet hole in his breast is not the entrance, but the exit of the bullet which ended his life. He died with his back to the enemy."

"Where is the general?" I inquired.

"Back a little way, but badly wounded in the leg. It happened early in the battle. Dr. Petrie is with him now."

"Wounded early in the battle?" said I. "Why even

after the thunder storm I heard his voice plainly, as he gave orders."

"Yes, we helped him from under his horse, and placing him on his saddle at the foot of a tree, unsheltered though was his position, he calmly smoked his pipe as he directed the battle, giving out orders that rang even above the rattle of guns—but let me conduct you to him."

He led the way back a few rods to a place nearly at the top of the slope that formed the eastern bank. Tears gathered in the general's eyes as he greeted me.

"This slaughter is awful, but I am glad to welcome you after its conclusion. I did not expect to see you again."

"But, General, how about yourself? You are wounded."

"A trivial thing," he answered, as he looked at my bandaged hand. "You, too, are wounded."

Dr. Petrie was busy at his leg, having bandaged it above the wound. He had improvised a tourniquet by inserting a small stick through the bandage and twisting it had stopped the flow of blood, and was now treating the wound itself.

As Herkimer saw that I was wounded, he turned to Dr. Petrie. "Leave me to myself and bind up this young man's hand properly. I am all right. See, he is in pain, as the white lines about his mouth testify."

The doctor glanced at me, and concluding I was not seriously injured, without replying, continued with the wounded leg of the general.

He was seated yet in the saddle, at the same place to which he had been moved when wounded, and was still smoking as quietly as though naught had befallen him. Only the recollections of the terrible slaughter perturbed his peace of mind.

"Can I again face the wives and parents of those killed here?" he murmured to himself.

"But the majority were against you," replied his brother-in-law, Bellinger. "Even a majority of the Committee of Safety advised battle at once. You are not to blame, for you said when you could no longer restrain your ill-advisers, 'The blood is upon their own heads.'"

Good old Dr. Petrie flinched, for he too, erring in judgment and holding the opinion of others, had advised immediate battle.

"What is to come cannot be avoided," was his answer.

CHAPTER XV

THE RETURN. DEATH OF HERKIMER

As soon as the general's wound was dressed his relatives held a consultation, and decided that he should be moved home as soon as expedient.

Since the hour was near the close of day, they thought it best to spend the night here, and depart the next morning. Already the glad yelps of wolves were to be heard, mingled with the mad snarlings of others quarreling and rejoicing over the division of the spoils, coming from the ravine to the west, warning us that to spend the night here in sound of the demoniacal howlings that would follow was sure to bring renewed floods of remorse to the distinguished wounded and might make night hideous to us all.

So we, with a half hundred other wounded and their friends who were attending them, moved east a good mile, there built a camp and made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances and the recollection of the day's horrible slaughter would allow. The helpless were moved on litters, and as so few had been provided, several trips were made before all were back.

From boughs, sticks, and blankets we made the general a rude, improvised bed, on which he lay comfortably and calmly.

Dr. Petrie made his way among the wounded,

giving an encouraging word here, administering an opiate there, binding up shattered limbs and spreading relief wherever he went. Tenderly he bound up my wounded hand, which had not troubled me during the day because a numbness had quieted the pain, but now was bleeding again and giving me pangs of excruciating pain. The bone was shattered, and he picked out small pieces of it, rebound the wound and admonished me to keep it clean lest proud flesh should retard its healing, saying, "In a short time you will be ready for another scouting expedition."

The groans of the wounded, the remorseful lamentations expressed by brother and father who had lost a son or brother that day, the awfulness of the hour when, under the twinkling stars, surrounded by dry eyes and stern-faced sympathizers, one after another died, while occasionally a long, dismal howl from a wolf possessing excessive power of throat and lungs was heard from the dark glade beyond, made night nearly as hellish as had been the day.

The next morning a cart was fashioned from the hind axle and wheels of one of the store wagons, a box made and fitted upon the cart, the box filled with small twigs overspread with many blankets, a tongue fitted with handles, or stakes, put crosswise through it, two projecting on either side, so that four men might haul or pull their beloved commander back to the wife and waiting household.

Horses might jar, or stumbling, might upset the precious burden and further injure him. The hands of

men who loved him should alone propel him homeward. The cart being ready, the general was lifted into it and the start made. Quiet reigned, voices when they broke the silence were subdued.

Behind us and perhaps ahead, two brothers might be seen carrying a litter on which lay the wounded body of a third brother; or a son, sitting on his horse, carrying in his arms the aged father who, in spite of his gray locks and advancing years and the admonitions of the good old wife to be heedful, had forgotten her words at the beginning of the battle and rushed in only to have his arm shot away, or perhaps rendered useless and left dangling at his side. Two neighbors were carrying another, while some, like myself, fortunate in their ability to walk, loaned their horses to those who were able to ride. Tedious, think you this journey was? Doubtless, but it must have been experienced to have realized its full magnitude.

For two whole days this procession moved, some two hundred at the start, but gradually growing less as we halted at the door of some humble roof and deposited the father or the son of the house, in some instances so badly wounded that we brought them home only to see them die before they were carried inside, the view of home and family accelerating the heart to undue action and the wounds to bleed afresh.

Toward evening of the second day we passed the Little Falls and drew near the Herkimer home. Here his brother-in-law, Carr, was sent ahead to prepare the wife for the ordeal that was before her.

Finally we came in sight of the Herkimer home, a large Dutch-styled square brick house, with its mansard roof and many windows; where in the basement cellar was the room fitted up as a place of defense with surrounding walls of masonry, through which port-holes opened. This room's center was taken up with more of the same material, so arranged that the inmates could secrete themselves in the niches there afforded should the contest wax at close range. Those in the secret knew that this room connected with a powder cellar or ammunition house at the back by a tunnel some twenty yards in its extent, where was stored the ammunition of the militia.

Beyond the house was situated the small elevation under whose surface, did we but know it, the general would soon sleep, and where in the generations to come countless hundreds would pay homage to his memory.

Dry-eyed did the wife meet us. "Nicholas," she said, "you are wounded. I, your *frau*, shall nurse you back to health."

On the pressing invitation of the thoroughly tired but conscious brigadier, I spent the night under his roof, sleeping late the next morning, for I had slept but little for three nights.

We had left the doctor, Petrie, at the German Flatts, he promising to come down the next morning and see the general, and so I bided, waiting for his appearance and judgment on the patient before I continued homeward. Toward noon he came and after he had emerged from the sick-room I explained to him why I tarried.

"Don't worry about the brigadier, VanHorn; he will be well as soon as you."

"I hope so," said I, and entering his room I bade him good-by, promising to see him again in a few days, after which I directed my course homeward.

Home! Yes, how sweet it seemed, and I had wanted to quit this home and this world; but a home-coming when one is tired and wounded makes life seem different.

Mother greeted me with many tears, gravely kissed my face and the bandage that covered my wounded member.

"I felt that I should see you again," she said. "I dreamed this last night; also in my dreams was the assurance that Gilbert would never again be in this home underneath whose roof you and he were reared together."

"Gilbert not come home again?" I inquired. "Where is he?"

"Gone," was the answer. "Gone to Lord Howe in New York. He went not alone either, for the Madame and Jeanne went with him, they to live beyond harm's reach, under the protection of Howe's army, and Gilbert to become a soldier. His father, who knew Lord Howe over the sea in days gone by, gave him a letter to his lordship which he says will insure a good berth for Gilbert."

"His berth will not be compared to the good times Oriskany has furnished the militia."

It was sarcasm, and to my mother, I know, but the

mention of good times that awaited him, compared with my experience of the last few days, forced it.

Gone, Jeanne gone, but why not? What had I to say about it? But I wondered if she quietly consented to this, her mother's wish, or was it of her own volition, believing it better that we be separated by distance. Did she love me? I hoped she did. But why then submit so easily to her mother? She had always been subject to that will. Why had she not broken from its influence? In time though she would forget me and wed Gilbert.

Now the old home and its memories held less charm for me than I had felt before I learned of Jeanne's departure. The following day I fully resolved that I, too, would go away. I would have myself transferred to the army proper; to Washington's division.

I had heard that St. Leger had reinvested Fort Stanwix, and Colonel Willet, having stolen through his lines at night, had repaired to Albany and secured an army under General Benedict Arnold, and was marching toward the fort with a thousand men to relieve the starved and beleaguered outpost.

On the day I chose to visit Herkimer, while crossing the ford, I looked about me and down the river I saw this army coming. I awaited their approach. Colonel Willet, as guide, rode beside Arnold.

These Continental soldiers with their polished bayonets, their regimental uniforms, the first of the kind I had seen, their discipline, bearing, and regularity of step, contrasted strangely with the same functions and

appurtenances of the Tryon County Militia. Colonel Willet introduced me to Arnold. He, cold and haughty, sternly looked me over. I observed the paleness of his face, the keenness of his deep-set gray eyes, as he was thus engaged. He observed my bandaged hand, his expression changed, and the thin, bloodless lips parted.

"Ah, wounded at Oriskany, I suppose."

On my affirmation, he said, "Well I, too, have suffered wounds. For what purpose are they? Your superiors look upon you only as ordinary, even if you have given a hand or perhaps a leg, as they tell me Herkimer is likely to do. And these honorable scars they talk about. Mine that I received with Montgomery serves but to remind me that I have been unjustly dealt with. But, young man, scars are desirable when worn by the right person, and may you be thus honored."

Rumors of the man's great bravery had I heard, and knowing this, I interrogated inwardly why this brave man's ravings over the disparity between him and his superiors. What more did he wish for? Could I have commanded even as small a body of soldiers as his command, I should have been satisfied.

Willet told him the manner in which I received my wound, of the hazardousness of my exploit.

"May you get credit for all the valor shown. May you and your companions never be made to feel by underlings or superiors that your services are but mildly appreciated. Nay," he fairly screamed it, "are hardly appreciated at all."

"How is Herkimer?" asked Willet as if to stop the harrowing talk of the other.

"No better," was my reply. "The wound is gangrenous. I am afraid we must lose him."

Arnold again interrupted, "Better to die," said he, "than live to be reviled. Why, man, his plan of battle will surely be criticised, although see what he has done; stopped the advances of St. Leger, who, could he have effected a confluence with Burgoyne, the Rebellion would have really been severed in twain." His voice, rasping and penetrating, was subdued to what might have been his natural tone as he finished by saying, "But should Herkimer desire it, I will leave with him a French surgeon I have brought along who claims to be adept at surgery and physic."

"Will this be acceptable to the family?" asked Willet of me.

"I think so, for Dr. Petrie as a member of the Committee disagreed with the Herkimers at Oriskany, and some feeling exists between them."

When at a place opposite and below the Herkimer residence, General Arnold stopped the army, and he, Willet, the French surgeon and myself forded the river and came up to the house wherein lay the object of our visit.

"What is the news?" I asked of Arnold, as we passed along.

"Nothing much; Burgoyne is fast coming down the Champlain country, while Howe has occupied Philadelphia, our troops having vacated."

I reflected that if Gilbert was to serve under Howe he would of necessity be at Philadelphia—and Jeanne, she and her mother would remain in New York, or would they accompany Gilbert? Should there be battle, thought I, would Gilbert win honors thereby? If not, his subtle tongue, his engaging manner would win for him advancement, even if glory otherwise eluded.

My thoughts were shifted by reason of the appearance of the general. He seemed glad to see Arnold, and said so, thanking him for his thoughtfulness in bringing a surgeon that was to stay a few days, or until he was better.

Arnold and Willet soon left and began again the march up the valley, while the surgeon made an examination of the patient's wound. Afterward, calling the wife, brothers, and sisters outside on the porch, he explained to them the great necessity for amputation, to which they and, a little later, the general assented.

While the preparation for the operation was going on, I availed myself of the chance to consult him. On entering the room I had been struck by the remarkable change in him, but as I took his hand and saw him from closer range, his frame seemed shrunken, his face pinched, features drawn, and his eyes back so far as to be half concealed under the shaggy brows.

"General," I said, "I wish to be transferred from the militia to the Continental Army, to Washington's division. Will you sign a permission to transfer? The paper is made out and only requires your signature to be completed."

He assented. A quill and inkhorn were produced. He wrote his name, legible and bold, and without a tremor to evidence the pain he felt.

"I regret your going; the valley will need its fighting men now. The Indians will retaliate upon whomsoever they can for the repulse we gave them."

"But one man less will not be noticed."

"Some one man would not, but you would. Before this I have not had a chance to thank you for the service you rendered in reaching Fort Stanwix. It was a brave undertaking."

"Scarcely worth mentioning," I replied, a little ashamed to recall the motive of this seeming bravery.

"So you are to continue fighting," he observed after a moment, "while I am to rest. Life has been a long fight anyway, and I have earned the rest."

The surgeon now came in, instruments in hand, while I withdrew.

"Stay yet a little while, and I will see you again," called out the most collected person in the room. Something about the surgeon's manner caused me again to observe him before I closed the door. I saw that his face was flushed and his hand unsteady. He had been drinking heavily since his arrival from wine contained in the sideboard. Had he drunk too much, or was the condition I had noted brought about by apprehension of the work at hand?

Going outside, I wandered down by the river's edge, where in thirty minutes Matthew Wormuth came and told me that the amputation was finished, but the leg

was bleeding badly. "In fact," said he, "I think Arnold's surgeon knows little about surgery."

"Do you think him sober?" I asked.

"No, he is as drunk as a fool. Had I noticed it before the operation I should have hindered."

We wandered back toward the house. Someone came outside and beckoned. We hastened our steps.

"The brigadier is very weak," said his brother; "the blood is flowing and the Frenchman does not stop it."

We hurried inside. All relatives, slaves, and a few neighbors were assembled around the bed.

"Mine end is nigh," said the brigadier. "There is an old war hymn, the one Martin Luther sang during his controversy with the Pope and was comforted. I would like to hear it again, and for the last time. Matthew, sing it to me."

In a hushed but clear tone did Wormuth sing:

"A firm fortress is our God, a good defense and weapon,
He helps us free from all our troubles which have now befallen us.
The old evil enemy he is now seriously going to work;
Great power and much cunning are his cruel equipments;
There is none like him on the earth.

"With our own strength nothing can be done, we are very soon lost;
For us the right man is fighting, whom God himself has chosen.
Do you ask who he is? His name is Jesus Christ,
The Lord Jehovah, and there is no other God.
He must hold the field.

If the world was full of devils ready to devour us,
We are by no means much afraid, for finally we must overcome
The prince of this world, however badly he may behave,
He cannot injure us, and the reason is because he is Judge.
A little word can lay him low.

"That word they shall suffer to remain, and not to be thanked for either.
He is with us in the field, with his spirit and his gifts.
If they take from us body, property, honor, child, and wife,
Let them all be taken away, they have as yet no gain from it.
The kingdom of heaven must remain to us."

A silence of a good minute followed, broken by the brigadier.

"Bring me the Holy Book."

It was placed in his hand, his strength was fast going. The bed on which he was lying was saturated with his blood that in its flowing measured the minutes left of a mortal existence. His hand was unsteady as he opened and read aloud the soothing words of the thirty-eighth Psalm, words that well fitted his present condition. His voice though fairly firm at first, weakened gradually and perceptibly as he neared the close. The psalm finished, he sank back, as though his work and salvation were finished, and died.

"Died like a Christian hero," whispered Matthew Wormuth in my ear.

Three days later we buried him in the family plot, near and to the east of the house, where,

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well."

CHAPTER XVI

THE COACHING PARTY

My hand had healed very slowly, so slowly, in fact, that two months passed before I found myself within the limitations of Washington's army, encamped at Whitemarsh, twelve miles outside Philadelphia.

As General Arnold had told me, Washington had abandoned the city on the approach by water of Lord Howe's army. With Howe had come back many Tory families, who had vacated this, their home city, when it was occupied by our forces, and returning when the powers to which they subscribed were its possessors.

I had on arriving been warmly welcomed by the commander, who, in a letter from Colonel Willet, had been apprised of my coming, I having mentioned this to Willet the day of Herkimer's death. The letter also had contained an account of how I carried the express from Herkimer to Fort Stanwix through the enemy's lines. Washington in his greetings to me, as I presented my transfer, spoke of this. "Colonel Willet," said he, "added that should I have a difficult piece of work to perform I might safely rely on you to do it. Coming so highly recommended, then, although in the capacity of a non-commissioned, you may be

quartered with the officers and move with the same freedom as though your lieutenancy were real."

"Can I serve as a private and yet retain this lieutenancy?"

"Yes, but why?" as he observed me closely.

"It is my choice," was all I said.

He dropped the subject after saying, "Serve as a private, but forget not the privileges of an officer."

The British had hardly made themselves acquainted with the city before they set about enjoying themselves of the best it afforded—handsome residences of patriots were used by the officers, who here fêted and in turn were fêted by their Tory friends. Grand army functions and celebrations were held by day and night, and many were the stories that reached our ears of the misappropriating of the king's funds in the giving of balls and parties. If extravagance marked the proceedings of one army, poverty and deprivement marked the other. Handsome equipages were driven about the country roads surrounding the city, filled with bright and gay parties of ladies and scarlet-coated officers or conventionally dressed citizens, or perhaps the coaches contained non-combatants, "neutralists" they called themselves, that drove along the highway lying between our camp and the Susquehanna. The direction that these were headed was sometimes toward the city, and we thought them Tory friends from New York or elsewhere going to Philadelphia to enjoy the coming winter of pleasure under the leadership of the young army subalterns.

Our commander, whom after only a few weeks of acquaintance I had learned to love, resolved to know something of these people who passed over this southeastern road, and had pushed out a second line of pickets so far as to cover some distance toward the city. The orders of these pickets were not over stringent, merely to look well into the character of any who passed, especially toward the city, satisfying themselves that they were eligible so to pass. If not, they were to be brought to headquarters.

I had been in the Continental Army perhaps two weeks, when, one day, it fell to my lot to be detailed as day picket on the road mentioned. My duties were light, walking up and down the road, mainly to keep my blood stirring, for notwithstanding the sun shone brightly, the November air was crisp. My attention, in the midst of the reverie to which I was accustomed to ofttimes drop, was drawn down the western way by the rumble that a heavy vehicle was making as it passed over the hard highway. I was soon able to recognize the vehicle as a smart chaise and four. It was soon upon me, and I, stationing myself in the center of the highway, signaled the driver to stop and reveal to me those he bore within. Stopping and clumsily climbing down, he opened the door and requested those inside to alight. They immediately complied. The first to step thence was a gentleman of fine appearance and bearing, made up with an elegant outfit of wearing apparel. Close behind him came an elderly man.

"It fell my lot to be detailed as day picket."

To my surprise, the next out was Gilbert Hastings, closely followed by Jeanne and two ladies.

The elder man had no sooner alighted than he inquired brusquely of me, "Who are you, sir, that you should thus hold up my coach and demand that I and my friends alight for your inspection?"

A little taken aback by his importance and by the presence of those I knew, I replied, "I am a soldier in the command of General Washington, and it is by his orders that I am here. I demand of you your name and to know whence you came and your mission."

At the sound of my voice, both Jeanne and Gilbert, who had up to this time not noticed me in particular, or owing to my changed appearance had not recognized me, looked in my direction. Jeanne uttered a cry of recognition, advanced toward me, extending her hand. I greeted her as best I could. Gilbert merely nodded. I went to him and offered my hand. He hesitated momentarily, then took it haughtily. His touch sent shivers over me. There was nothing in that handshake that would convey to an observer the fact that we were brought up under the same roof, and as brothers.

These short and, to me, painful formalities being over, I turned to the elderly man, who claimed ownership of the coach, and again asked, "Your name, sir, and your business here."

"Is it imperative that you know?" he asked icily.

"It is."

"Edward Shippen is my name, of Philadelphia."

"And the others?"

"My wife, daughter, and daughter's friend; the others you seem to have met before."

"And the name of your daughter's friend?"

He hesitated momentarily, but quickly enough to allay any suspicion his hesitancy might have provoked, replied, "John Anderson, and it occurs to me that your commander, whom you named, also instructed you in impertinency."

I answered, "I am doing but my duty, and concise answers from you will expedite matters, and get you on your way sooner than quibbling. On what business are you bound?"

This time his answer came more quickly, "None but pleasure."

At this I rejoined, "I am afraid I shall have to escort you before the commander."

The tall, elegant man who had first stepped from the chaise, and had not as yet spoken, came forward at this.

He advanced holding out his hand, and in it I saw the glitter of gold. "Come, sir, my good man," he said, "take this, and let us return. We knew not that your picket line extended so far."

Jeanne flushed at this offer, and as for me, I struck his hand so heavily that the gold flew some distance into the brush that lined the opposite side of the highway. I said, "Your insult, sir, is only overlooked on account of the presence of ladies. To the headquarters then. Make haste. I will lead the way."

"May I walk with you first a little distance, Henry," said Jeanne timidly.

At sight of Jeanne, I had instantly experienced a desire for revenge upon Gilbert. His insult had furthered this desire, and I now knew that the opportunity was mine. Would I do it? This man who, not content alone with depriving me of Jeanne, had openly insulted me in the presence of his friend. To be sure, I was scarcely a fit subject to be introduced to such a motley crowd; my clothes were in tatters and what remained was so faded that the color of all was identical. I compared my appearance with that of Gilbert and mused that small wonder it was that Jeanne preferred Gilbert to me, if outward appearance counted, for he was dressed fully as well as the gallant man whom they called "John Anderson." I could but notice his high boots and broadcloth coat, set off by purple waistcoat and velvet breeches. In keeping with this, he wore numerous ruffles at his neck and sleeves, while his head was adorned with a many-cornered and shining beaver. Truly, thought I, being a soldier in his Majesty's army has more advantages in some ways than in our army. Mentally I calculated the cost of Gilbert's outfit and wondered whence came the funds to purchase it, for it represented more than I had or would receive in the way of compensation for the coming year. As I was thus musing, Jeanne again questioned me.

"May I not walk with you for just a little way?"

Without replying, I started back over the roadway whence they came, she following.

Beyond earshot from the others we halted.

"What prompted you to thus delay us?" she asked.

My reply was, "Duty."

"Not revenge?" glancing at me superciliously.

At this I was silent.

"If so," she continued, "it is unmanly."

"See here," said I, "orders must be obeyed."

"Are there no deviations?" came next.

"None," said I emphatically.

She drew a long breath, as she said, "Not even for me?"

Again I fortified myself behind silence.

At last I said, "If I did not take your party in, I should be derelict in my duty. Duty, though inexorable, is sometimes hard."

She placed her hand on my arm. "Henry, to be caught within the enemy's lines means severity in the way of punishment, does it not?"

"Death," I answered slowly.

Tears gathered in her eyes. "She is thinking of the close call Gilbert is having to this punishment," I thought.

"Does duty lead you to think that Gilbert for this, an unfortunate falling into your hands, merits death?"

This staggered me. I could not believe that I was bound to give over Gilbert to death for so trivial a

matter as this, and if at first I rejoiced to think him in my hands, now I regretted his presence here.

"Your mother," said Jeanne, "would she approve of such an interpretation of the word *duty?*"

"No," I confessed.

"Then release us, will you not?"

"Give me time," I said, "to think." As between duty and Gilbert, the balance of weight was on the side of duty. Yet to give him over would be inhuman. He had done no intentional wrong in crossing our line. To release one meant all. And could I, for the sake of Jeanne, who had requested it, could I let all go? I well knew the elegant young man present must be an officer of the Royal Army, who had discarded his regimentals to avoid recognition outside the city. And the elder man, who knew of him? All were of Philadelphia, and all must be sympathizers with the city's military occupants. But I could see no other way out. "You may all go," I said, then and there realizing that should we, in this controversy, be detected by any of my fellow-soldiers and so reported, I would have trouble to explain my actions. I will suffer then and not Gilbert, thought I, as I looked on Jeanne's now beaming face.

Before returning to the chaise I asked her how she came to be here, at which she replied that she and her mother after going to New York had, as many Tories had done, come on to Philadelphia, there expecting, under the protection of the Royal Army, and with this army as entertainers, to pass a pleasurable season. Her

mother had taken a house in Philadelphia, they had made the acquaintance of the gentleman within the coach, Mr. Shippen, and in company with the others had accepted the invitation for this drive, to find that our recently established picket lines had entangled them.

She gave the others to know that they were to be molested no further, as we returned to the coach. Gilbert could not repress a grin at her announcement, while John Anderson, as he smiled, turned his back upon me to avoid offense.

Said I to myself, "Jeanne, they think, did all this. Gilbert knows of my regard for her, and thinks that she deceptively has used her knowledge of this same fact in beguiling me. Ah," I thought, "Gilbert, I did not wish to pose as my brother's murderer, and yet, little credit do I get for acting as your deliverer."

As the chaise departed, a white hand and kerchief waved from a lowered window, and continued until the chaise taking the right hand road below me disappeared from my view.

Observing that they were not to return over the road which they came, I inwardly observed that perhaps they were to lengthen the ride back to the city, thereby prolonging the pleasure.

An hour later, afoot, the figure of a bent and misshapen man approached me from over the highway whence my former visitors had come. He showed me his passport, properly signed, and passed on inside the lines. Strange, thought I, that this queer man should

have unlimited privileges to pass or repass our lines at any time. I wonder why, and what he is?

That night, after I was relieved from duty, word was handed me that the general would see me at his headquarters and at once. Seeking his presence then, I found him awaiting me. Immediately after greetings, he asked, "You were posted out on the Philadelphia road to-day, were you not?"

My answer, of course, was in the affirmative.

"While there, did a chaise with several occupants seek to pass you?"

"I saw such an equipage as you describe take the right hand road below me," I replied.

"Then they were bent on pleasure driving rather than on any mission eastward?" It was true I had seen the chaise pass this way, but not until I had given my consent. My evasion was sufficient; he did not press the point further.

I wondered how he had known of this chaise or its occupants. I wondered why he questioned me. Then, recalling the odd bit of humanity that had shown me his pass in the afternoon, I instantly thought him a spy who had followed the party out of the city.

"Were the occupants important personages?" I inquired.

"One of them was known to me, one Edward Shippen, an arch Tory, the other I have reason to believe was Major John André of the Royal Army."

John André! John Anderson! The words burned within me as I saluted and withdrew. Natural sugges-

tion in the mind of a quick-witted man to substitute Anderson for André and deceive me. As I realized the purport of it all, flooded with remorse, I rushed from the house, knowing that I had allowed a major of the British army to pass my post, and this on the explanation of the word *duty* as promulgated by the woman whom I loved.

With bowed head, I found my way to my own quarters, and to bed, and such a night I never experienced. Sleep was impossible. Reviewing my past, I found that the very woman whom I had tried to forget, by reason of whom I had entered this army, by whom rejected, I had longed for death, should be the one at whose suggestion I should give up my manhood and make myself a very traitor. For what reason? So that her future husband might live. I longed to go and tell the general about it, but dared not. Knowing all, he would never again trust me, and might dismiss me from the service, but I deserved all this, I knew myself.

As the gray of morning came, with it also came the reassuring thoughts that what I had done was for love and not personal gain, and none others here knowing it, the secret was safe. Aye, was it safe? Yes, until now it was never told. Perhaps it was all for the best, for I could scarcely have justified myself in delivering Gilbert over, even though John André had been so treated. But could I have delivered him without sacrificing the son of my stepfather through duty, I might have done it had I known his identity.

The remembrance of my perfidy and semi-falsehood I could not shake off. Added to my greater grief of before, it almost at times consumed me. Like all other things, hard to bear, however, it became in time more of myself, and thus more endurable. I had read somewhere of heavy rings that, being placed around the necks of slaves as punishment, sometimes through length of years sank into the flesh and became forgotten parts of them. Yet, they bore it. It was so with my grief. Only occasionally the imprint would fester.

CHAPTER XVII

PLANS SULLIVAN EXPEDITION AND RAISING LAKE OTSEGO

The good nature of the reader has been too often trespassed upon to minutely particularize the next one and one-half years of my experience, through which I tried to forget my weight of woe; tried to forget Jeanne and failed; looked about for some way to recompense my conscience for having allowed my love for her to frustrate duty and again failed.

I was a participant in the affair at Monmouth, where, after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the enemy, our army pursued and overtook them, and that was all. Indeed I found the tedium oppressing, especially as the volcanic influences I already held were as much as I could contain. I had been with the general through the terrible march of four days from Whitemarsh to Valley Forge, had listened to the moaning and the anguish from the camps, and finally came to the position occupied by Washington where, commanding the noble Hudson, he could hold the successor of Howe—Clinton—well in hand within Manhattan.

From home each month came a letter written by my mother. These told me of the massacres of Cherry Valley and Springfield, the devastation and laying

waste of my own valley, the burning of neighbors' homes, the scalping of their inhabitants by Brant and his followers, who were working out vengeance evoked by the slaughter of their own tribes at Oriskany. With tears and swelling heart did I express my feelings, as I read of the killing of Matthew Wormuth at Cherry Valley; killed by Brant's orders. I remembered well the former friendship that held these two together, commencing at the time when around the festive board we had gathered, after the night Jeanne and I, as children, had spent in the wood. Nearly all, these letters said, of the rebel homesteads were burned; many of the inhabitants, women and children included among the list, scalped or taken prisoners. I could readily see that my own home had been spared by reason of my stepfather's sentiments, but wondered if Paul Manning and his home had been disturbed.

I wrote my mother regarding this, and was pleased when the reply came that the pillagers had come so close to them as to burn the Madame's house, but had left the habitation of Paul intact. The marauders had mistaken these two houses, thinking when they burned the one that it was the home of the other, I thought.

Frantic appeals, she wrote me, were being made to the Congress by the inhabitants for an adequate army to ward off this oppression, and that Colonel Willet had been placed in command of the garrison at the new Fort Plain, a stronger and more pretentious harbor for the small forces already sent by the Congress, built just west a few yards of the old fort it had superseded.

The latter letters contained accounts of the burning of German Flatts and Currietown, of the battle of Stone Arabia, and of the inadequacy of the small garrison to prevent these raids, and added that a final appeal was to be made for sufficient forces to quell the disturbance and to hasten safety.

Ofttimes as I perused these letters, I wished myself back within the domains of childhood, where I well knew only one-third of its former people now lived, a third killed and a third gone to the enemy. I felt a desire to go back, but could not bring myself to decide favorably, when a letter came telling me of the final appeal that was to be made, backed up by powerful influences. I was on the point of going to Washington and telling him of my intentions of quitting his command, and asking his consent, but finally I decided not to do this.

The army was now near Peekskill, and Washington was using the Robinson house as headquarters. The following day the general sent word that he wished to see me there.

He wished to consult with me, he said, after I had entered his room and was seated, about a proposition I might know something about, explaining that the Congress had notified him that the Middle New York Province had made repeated requests for protection from the Indians of Brant.

"I know little about the country involved, but consider that an expedition into its interior is expedient." He wished, he said, to consult with me about the country

routes and the practicability of such an expedition. I, knowing the country, could make a map of it for him, and would I do this? We talked the matter over at some length before I left, promising to furnish the desired map in the morning.

It was late that night before I finished my crude drawings. When completed, I leaned back on the bench, my fingers interlocked in front of, and my hands cradling my knees, half asleep, when with blear eyes, I gazed on the handiwork of my pen. The place I had designated by oblong irregular lines, representing Lake Otsego, was intensified before my uncertain and drowsy vision, the rest of the map faded and left its lines there alone.

Then returned to me conception and remembrance of that which I had experienced on the bank of this lake, when some two years before, with General Herkimer at my side, I had a vision of soldiers peopling its surface. If an expedition was to be made, why not from this point? Why not, starting here, sweep the Susquehanna Valley, uniting with another army, march west, and then clear the interlying section of its "red vermin."

My tentmates were long asleep before I had completed the details of my plan, resolved to show and to explain them to the general in the morning.

Imbued with enthusiasm and a desire to substantially apease my conscience for a past offense, when an important and distinguished officer's identity had been concealed by me, through love of a woman, I hastened to the house of the general, and explained my map, after

which I detailed the plan as mapped out the night before.

"I have chosen Sullivan to command the expedition," said he. "He will march up the Susquehanna to Tioga Point, and thence westward," as he traced the route on the map with his finger, "to the middle lake country, through the rich farming villages of the Senecas and Cayugas. I shall bid him lay waste the marks of civilization that it pleases these people to point out, the chimneyed homes, the orchards and corn fields, demoralizing all before him. The massacre perpetuated by the Five Nations shall not go further without vindication."

"But, General, the point from which these tribes have rendezvoused will be untouched." I ran my fingers along the part of the map from the Tioga Point to the source of the Susquehanna. "This is their vantage ground, their stronghold. Ahwage, do they call their principal habitation on the river. While your army may ruin their home country, yet the warriors themselves will be far up the Susquehanna Valley."

"True," said he, "but Sullivan will scarcely have time before fall to cover all the territory I have chosen. To march further up, to go to the source of the river is impossible."

"Yes," I hastily interrupted, "but another division could leave Albany; taking the Mohawk west to the Canajoharie, they could portage, after cutting a roadway to Lake Otsego, bringing boats, cannon, and ammunition along with them, load and embark on the

lake, floating these cannon and ammunition down the river, while the army marching along its bank could drive the enemy before them. Should the river be low, the very small opening of the lake could be dammed; the water raised sufficiently high, this dam could be loosed and the boats floated down on the freshet."

He asked a few more questions, and ended by saying, "As the Congress have placed the matter wholly in my hands, I will at once order several companies to assemble at Albany under General James Clinton, commander of the Northern Division, and brother of the governor, and proceed to carry out your plans. I appoint you as chief engineer. You will proceed to Albany, assist in the buying of such supplies as you named, conveying to Clinton my more explicit orders concerning the expedition, that shall be, in detail, according to your plan. We will try to have the armies meet at Tioga Point as near August first as possible."

Some few days did I spend in camp, while the final arrangements were being perfected, then ascended the river to Albany, to find that already the army had been collecting there. Even now there were detachments from the third, fourth and fifth New York Regiments, one from Massachusetts, and the famous Fifth of Pennsylvania, to be followed a few days later by two companies of artillery. They were encamped on the Pine Hills above the city, awaiting the readiness of the expedition to march. I, myself, had plenty to do, arranging and loading boats on

wagons, seeing that cannon were properly loaded and getting ready the train of supplies that would march overland to Schenectady, here to unload the boats, man, row or tow them up the river to the Canajoharie, the wagons, artillery, and men to follow on its bank.

Some difficulties were experienced in getting together enough horses for our wants, as the country had been cleared of its horseflesh so often as to make these four-footed beasts scarce. Cattle could be had in profusion, however.

Soon after June first, the arrangements were completed and the start made.

A peculiar spectacle did we present, I imagine, as we climbed the hill toward Schenectady, the officers of different divisions leading. General Clinton, being detained, was to follow some few days later. There were some eighteen hundred men in all, after which came the part I had to do with, the appurtenances of our trip over land and water. It was made up of some four hundred horses, two hundred wagons, a large herd of cattle that were to be slaughtered later for provisions, twelve cannon, and later at Schenectady was to be further augmented by two hundred large boats, or *bateaux*.

After three days we came into that part of the valley most familiar to me. The flats below Roof's Village had been selected as a suitable place for the army to camp, while the roadway to Lake Otsego was being built. At The Nose I was instructed to ride forward and ascertain if this place was now procur-

able and desirable. So I urged my horse forward and before an hour had passed had left the oncoming army far behind.

As I drew near the scenes with which I was so familiar, the sun shining brightly overhead, for it was a beautiful early summer morn, the birds sang gayly in the treetops, the speckled trout joyously leaped in mid-air as they sported over the rifts, and I, eagerly intent on my journey's purpose, paused and gazed on the landscape before me, and my heart swelled and expanded, as it had not for many days; the beautiful obtusely ending hills, the deep ravines running back from the glorious Mohawk, the delightful green of its verdure and the deeper tint of its pastures and meadow land, but now its natural beauty seemed, in the morning sunlight, to be a hundred times enhanced. My ardent admiration was not even cooled on sight of the foundation walls that had supported homes wherein neighbors had lived, but, alas! were no more; all ruthlessly destroyed by the torch of Brant.

Coming closer to Roof's Village, at the turn in the road, I spied below me, and at my left, a fishing hole, a place where Paul Manning, Jeanne, and I had spent many happy hours, coming down from above to enjoy the rare sport this place afforded.

As I gazed down upon it, memory turned back, a shadow passed before my vision and forced unpleasant thoughts. Was not within these precincts the place where sorrow had alternated the joyfulness of youth, the place where I had loved and lost, where the Ma-

dame had told me not to love her daughter, as her hand was already promised? I recall it all now; the Madame's words come back to me vehemently; "that in case Gilbert was not a suitor for her daughter's hand, she would object to a low-born Dutchman as a husband for Jeanne." Ah, bitterness of hate and remorse. If the destroying angel were mine to command, I would have him obliterate by one stroke of his hand, this scene before me that a moment ago I had looked upon with ecstasy.

Now I cursed it all, this valley, its inhabitants, myself, and, most of all, that inexorable fate that had stepped in between us, and as I argued and believed, that parental obligation of duty and obedience that Jeanne felt.

Hard had it seemed to me at first, but now my grief seemed unbearable. Why had Jeanne ever come into my life to blight it, and why had my mother married a man with a son who was to frustrate my purposes? No answer framed itself that alleviated the distress I felt.

Do you ask, my children, why I, in the midst of my boyhood scenes, allowed myself to give way to hatred and curse my own beautiful valley? I can only say that I had not as yet learned the lesson of life—that lesson that comes by years and by experience and teaches us to wait and hope.

The appearance of the place where we were to camp silenced my unhappy thoughts, and I busied myself looking over and making calculations for the encampment of the army that was behind.

CHAPTER XVIII

VISITS HOME AND PAUL MANNING

The army arriving that night, the following morning one-third of its men were put at work cutting trees and filling in the bog places over which we were to tramp the twenty miles to Lake Otsego; over a portage that lay past hill and through valley in the midst of a primeval forest that, for the first time, was to witness the spectacle of a civilized army passing under its leafy canopy. The work was of necessity slow, for the roadbed needed to be well made in view of the heavy boat-loaded wagons that would move over its surface. Much of my time was spent with the working parties, engaged in planning out the many turns necessitated by the uneven ground, avoiding small streams and especially thickly wooded portions of the forest where our work would be more arduous.

I had expected to visit my mother and Paul Manning before this, but one week had slipped by and no time as yet convenient for this had come. My mother, among the valley folks that visited us, came to see me, for I had written her a fortnight before of our coming, but I was out on the duties mentioned and failed to see her.

For a few miles back from the river did we pass over

a virgin route that had to be built entire; there meeting the road that has since been called the Continental Road, we widened it, strengthened small log bridges, removing overhead branches that might interfere with the heavily loaded wagons.

In ten days we were at Cherry Valley, and here before the last two leagues of the road were prepared, I, having to go back to the Canajoharie to consult Clinton, who had arrived meanwhile, bethought me that it would be a good time to visit home. I reached the camp at nightfall, and after reporting, obtained permission to visit home, and did so, riding up the river with a full moon shining from above, and reflecting itself in the river at my feet.

It is unnecessary for me to state that two persons, my mother and Paul Manning, were pleased to see me, nor did James Hastings welcome me with any less enthusiasm than marked his manner toward me formerly. I first spent some hours at home, telling my mother as much as I could of the plans of our expedition, and of my experience since I left, not omitting to mention to James Hastings that I had seen Gilbert once near Philadelphia in company with Jeanne and others. "Personages high up in the esteem of the enemy, too," I said, feeling that he might care to know and rejoice that his son had won for himself notice from such people, and yet sure that he would attribute Jeanne's acquaintance with such dignitaries to Gilbert's influence. But when he would have pressed me closer as to the circumstances that had brought us two together, I

parried his query by saying, "Enemies in sentiment are not always unfriendly."

The idea that Gilbert and I met on friendly terms pleased him and he dropped the matter there.

It was late when I left home and went to the house of my old friend, Paul. Peering in at his window before entering, I saw him holding in his hand a book, and heard his voice as he repeated vehemently the beautiful and soothing stanzas of "Paradise Lost."

I rattled the vine that thatched the doorway. He raised his head; tears stood in his eyes, I noticed, and were still there when he opened the door.

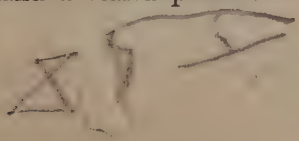
My heart went out to him anew. In his loneliness and solitude, with none to cheer or care for him, he found comfort in poetry, lines that brought up past occurrences and forced tears.

I was seated when he inquired about myself. "Had I heard aught of Jeanne and the Madame since I left? How liked I my new field?" To all of which I replied and the reader knows what the answers were.

We talked at some length, when he abruptly asked, "When will you again see General Washington?"

"I am to leave Clinton below the lake and go directly to him, bearing news of the successful or otherwise launching of the expedition. This is against my will," I added, "but the General requested it. I preferred to go with the expedition."

As I was leaving, Paul withdrew into the bed chamber adjoining, and presently returned, holding in his hand a sealed packet. "I have here a message to



General Washington. Well may you look surprised at such a declaration, yet it is of the utmost importance; keep it intact if possible, and deliver to the General at your earliest opportunity. I have waited and longed for a chance to place this message in the General's hands, and now a desirable opportunity to do so is afforded."

"I will do as you request," I said, and folding the packet carefully, placed it securely in the lining of my coat, and bade him adieu.

What possible motive had Paul in addressing a note to Washington? I asked myself, but was far from a solution, after turning the matter over several times.

When a mile down the river, while riding along, busy with my thoughts, the sudden bang of a gun aroused me and a bullet whizzed close to my ear. I shied my horse into a clump of trees near by, and waiting looked about, for the moonlight so illuminated the scene that I hoped I might see him who sent the leaden message.

Here I remained for some minutes, but nothing broke the silence. I wondered if I had been mistaken? But no, the report of the gun and the song of the bullet had been too pronounced to admit of a mistake. A chance shot, I finally assured myself, and not intended for me. Thus thinking, I reined my horse out in the open and started again.

Crash! crash! spoke the guns.

My horse reeled and fell. I saved myself from being precipitated underneath and dashed again under

protection of the tree clump, leaving my horse frantically kicking in his death struggles.

What meant this? It was evident that some one or two men were intent on my life, and who could it be? No Indian foe would be lurking so near our army without having been previously discovered, and besides our scouts had reported none in these parts at present.

The road just in front of me for some fifty rods lay on the top of a little ridge, and from my position I saw that I could by crawling on my hands and knees keep my head below the crown of this ridge, and gain a point some distance below, where bushes between the road and river would protect me from the direction across the water whence the shots had come.

It was plain to be seen that my would-be assailants knew my identity, and of my visit home, and were disappointed in that I had chosen the opposite side of the river for the return, having gone home on the side they now were on. They had placed themselves in waiting, and, not having me at closer range, had chanced shots at me from a distance. Carefully I crawled forward to cover this distance before me. I was compelled to creep along in nearly a half-doubled position, a position that cramped my back and strained my muscles. When about half way across, I essayed to peep over the bank, and thought I saw two forms outlined underneath a tree and silhouetted on the moonlit ground beyond, but was not certain.

Slowly the point I had in mind was coming closer and finally was reached. Here I straightened my back

and considered what was best for me to do. Below me, the protecting bushes extended perhaps one-half mile, in some places so sparse that they afforded little protection. I could dash by these thin places, thought I, but what would I do when coming again to the open? Over and over again, I thought, who are my enemies that are across the water here endeavoring to take my life, and what is their object in singling me out? None of the soldiers had been molested in any way, I knew, and that gave rise to the suspicion that there was some special object in this attack on me. I carefully and stealthily, knowing that any noise I made would reveal my change of base, opened the brush in front, and peered out across the river at a point where I thought to have seen before two forms. Now I had a better range, and looking diagonally, I verified my sight of a few minutes before, and saw plainly two men standing under the tree as mentioned. One man was large of stature, and the other short. This much I noted of them and nothing more, for the shade obscured any other factor of their appearance that might have identified their personages.

Knowing that I gained nothing by delaying my progress here, and recalling that my pass only allowed me to remain away until midnight, I resolved to proceed. For a mile nothing hindered, then a shout from the distant bank warned me that my adversaries had discovered my flight, but I well knew they would fear to come closer to camp.

Passing the sentry, I went directly to Clinton's tent

and told him of my experience. Calling an aide, he directed that a detail of twenty men in squads of five each, beat about the river's bank for a few miles up the river and apprehend the would-be assailants if possible.

Lying on a cot in a tent near Clinton's, I slept soundly until daybreak, when an aide aroused me and requested that I come to Clinton's tent at once, where I found him dressed and awaiting me.

"Your would-be assassins have been captured," said he. "We try them at once."

I accompanied him to the temporary provost, and entering viewed the prisoners. Instantly I noticed the disparity in their heights; one was tall, the other short.

Military court, composed of the few officers of the expedition, with General Clinton in authority, convened at once, and outside the provost under a tent. My evidence was given. Inconclusive though was my identification, yet there was no mistaking it, for none such as they had been seen hereabouts. As I left the witness stand, Peter Wormuth came in and identified one as a man named Hale, and the other as one Newberry, traitors to our cause whose atrocities were many. Both, he said, had assisted Brant in the horrible slaughter at Cherry Valley, and Newberry had scalped a child who was slightly wounded and conscious at the time.

Both culprits had been searched, and the revelations of this search offered final and conclusive evidence against them.

"On each of their persons," said Colonel Dubois, who

acted as prosecutor, "has been found an incriminating document that I will now read."

The words he pronounced after he had cleared his throat sent a chill down my spine.

To all whom this instrument may come—Greetings:

You are hereby apprised that the subscriber hereunto will pay the sum of £25 (twenty-five pounds) for the proof of the death of one Henry VanHorn, late of the Canajoharie District of Tyron County, Province of New York. He was recently of Washington's Division of the Rebel Army, and in June left it for Albany or the Mohawk Valley, presumably. He is large of frame, some six feet in height, black hair and eyes, and swarthy of complexion, is somewhat reserved in manner and slow of speech. The above sum will be paid on ample proof of his death.

Sir Henry Clinton,
Commander His Majesty's Armies in America,
Attest, John André,
Adgt. Gen.

God save the King.

"What, a price on your head," said Clinton. "Why?" I was too amazed to reply had I known.

"You must have an enemy influential with the British commander who bears the same name as I."

My enemy's name came to mind at once—Gilbert Hastings. No, it could not be; he could not, would not do this. I had saved him at Whitemarsh; he would not now lend his influence to such perfidy. But who else had an object, and his object, if any, must have been Jeanne. She had not consented to marry him as yet, perhaps, or her mother could not force her to, and he believing that if I were removed, she would think

differently; or mayhap his failure to woo her made him anxious for revenge. He knew when I left Washington's camp on my present expedition. Then he knew of my proximity to him in New York, when perhaps this scheme had first entered his mind. The spies of the Royal Army, then, were at his command.

The verdict of the court was soon rendered, and the villains shot; as Clinton wrote his brother, the governor, " to the satisfaction of all concerned."

CHAPTER XIX

AT LAKE OTSEGO. MURPHY APPEARS

Two weeks later we were at the lake, and having found the water in its outlet, the Susquehanna, so low as to be impassable for our heavy-laden boats, we had built a dam at the juncture of the lake and river, and were now waiting for the water to rise sufficiently high that we might, on the freshet produced when the dam was opened, be carried to Tioga Point, some one hundred miles below.

The construction of the dam had furnished nearly all with labor, but now this being over, with nothing to do the men could hardly contain themselves. To alleviate this, many different pastimes were indulged in. The game of quoits was the most popular of any, while cards, chess, wrestling and running matches, each in turn had its share of patronage. Yet in spite of all this, the tension was growing day by day, and during the last part of our stay, a character, of whom I had recently heard much on every hand, well known in the vicinity where we were now located, made his way into our camp. His fame was already known, and his record was such that his advent among us furnished us with a theme to discuss during our periods of ennui. His stories and unique style, his adroitness in return-

ing laughable answers to questions did much to spread good feeling among us.

I will describe his coming. It was a hot, sultry afternoon, and having nothing particular at hand, I walked around to General Clinton's tent. He was seated outside on a bench, in the shade of a large pine tree. Addressing me as I came up, he said, "Van-Horn, everything seems to be working well for our success in this enterprise, and I doubt not that it will turn out as we have intended. There have been no accidents to interfere with our plans, and I hardly think there will be now. To be sure, your life was threatened, and one of our privates has disappeared, but he may have deserted or turned Tory, you know, and be now congratulating himself at having escaped."

"'Tis a domb'd lie, soir," said a voice at our right, "and if it's me pardner Dave Elerson you're talking about, I know'd him well. He is more sincere than many a mon who comes out in foine feathers, soir," as he nodded his head toward Clinton. "He was either murdered or chased away by the Injuns, no doubt of it. I killed an Injun this morning over on the Schenevus Creek, and there is many more, soir, in these parts, and that's probably what became of me pardner."

We turned our heads in the direction whence the voice came, and beheld a figure that instantly attracted our attention. As he spoke, he advanced toward us, while I took in every bit of his peculiar dress and manner. I

will make an effort to describe this strange man, as I first saw him. On his feet were large and coarse moccasins, long and lacing nearly to his knee, where they were met by deerskin breeches. His coat completed a suit of the same material, laced tightly up the entire length in front, through eyelets cut in the tough deerskin, by fine strings of leather. On this coat were wrought curious designs or pictures, grotesque in character and fearful in design. The one on the back, representing a powerfully built white man, was undoubtedly the wearer himself, in the inhuman act of scalping a party of six sleeping Indians; while upon the front of the garment was a representation of the same brawny and mighty white man in mortal combat with an equally large Indian; the white man, having gained the advantageous point of the struggle, had pinioned the Indian's hands behind him, and holding them in his own left, was swinging in his brawny right a hatchet toward the hapless Indian's scalp.

On both their faces were depicted the inner emotions of the mind; on the Indian's face could be clearly seen hate and scorn, while on the face of the white man there rested a look of satisfaction, as sometimes comes to us when our plans and designs have not been frustrated. All this was done in an artistic manner, and as he afterwards told me himself, the colors were obtained from the juice of certain wild berries known to him.

If he had on anything that resembled a shirt, it was not visible above the coat that laced tightly up under

his chin. On his head there rested a cap of coonskin, long and narrowing nearly to a peak, and this peak hanging over at one side, gave him a sort of careless and rowdy look. Of stature, he was fully six and one-half feet, straight as a young cedar, large of girth, and broad of shoulder. His hair and beard were of the same color, a sorrel red. His hair was long and showed but little care, while his beard was unkempt and bushy, and both by deep seams and furrows gave unmistakable evidence that he had recently undertaken the task of trimming them himself. His complexion, probably light at birth, was now so browned by wind and sun that it resembled an old moccasin that had lain out in the storm and long since been forgotten. His forehead was low and overshadowed heavy eyebrows of a darker color than his hair, while beneath those brows there looked out at you or gleamed a pair of blue-gray, fierce eyes, eyes that showed you at once that their owner was not a man to be trifled with, and yet in spite of their ferocity there was something in the expression that reminded you that he could be depended on, and would prove true to his friends and convictions. Standing by his side and held in his right hand, of nearly the same height as himself, was a gun, that I noticed had two barrels. I also noticed on its stock a long line of notches cut as with a knife.

After this perfunctory introduction, an introduction that amounted to a challenge on his part, the stranger on coming within a short distance of us

stopped and assumed an attitude of stolidity, as though he were waiting for a reply to his challenge.

Clinton, having surveyed the stranger in a critical way, slowly arose and in anger and sarcasm inquired, "By whom have I the honor to be so addressed?"

"By a mon, soir, who is not obligated to ye or yours, one who has already done a considerable for the side of the rebels," was the reply, delivered in a rich Irish brogue.

"And a good thing it is for you that you are not of our army proper, or I would show you what it means to insult an officer; I would give you a lesson in discipline that you would not soon forget," said Clinton.

At this the stranger snapped his large finger and said, "Well, perhaps, but not so fast, me friend; I was only defending the name of one who is no traitor."

"If you are not a regular soldier, how came you here, and how did you pass our sentry?"

"By this discharge from Morgan's Body of Riflemen," as he exhibited a well-worn document, replacing it quickly in his pocket.

"Come," said I, speaking for the first time, "tell us who you are."

"Well," said he, "the Injuns call me 'Old Murph.'"

"Not Tim Murphy?" I cried in amazement, as I recalled the stories I already knew of him.

"The same, soir, at your sarvis."

"And where are you going?" asked Clinton.

"Roight here, and nowheres else, to-day. But I

heard as how you were going to move this army down the river, and I thought I might give you advice that would help you. I might go along. I knows this country, soir, as though I made it, and if ye be commander here, I apologize for me seemin' impudence, but I was mad, soir, domb'd mad."

Without taking notice of his apology, Clinton returned, "You wait until I talk with VanHorn, who seems to know something about you, and I will see you again."

"VanHorn, soir, did you say?" he asked. "Not from over on the Mohawk, air ye?"

"The same," I answered.

"I hasn't seen ye since the scrimmage at Oriskany."

"At Oriskany? Why, were you there?"

He laughed loudly, "Was I there? Didn't you and I and another one carry the missage to the fort?"

Then for the first time did I recognize the figure before me as my fellow-scout in carrying the message, as he had mentioned. Grasping his hand, I shook it heartily, and inquired how he had fared since last we met, and why had he so altered his dress since that time.

He replied, "Being an Injun-killer, I wanted to look it."

On my assurance to Clinton that the newcomer was known to me, and that I would vouch for him, and that Murphy really knew, as he said, "the country as

though he made it," Clinton decided that he was too valuable a man to lose, and so came among us Tim Murphy. His advice and counsel, his daring and intrepidness did much to facilitate the success of this expedition. My acquaintance with him served me to a good purpose, and in the following years he assisted me in the most daring and arduous task I have ever undertaken, one that did much to alleviate the distresses of my fellow-soldiers.

During the time of our stay, after his coming, he seemed perfectly pleased with his surroundings, hunting for game for the officers' tables, bringing in deer often enough to keep the larder well supplied, fishing with a rude net, fashioned from the inner bark of trees, and catching different varieties of fish in large numbers. Although his labors were light, his appetite was of enormous proportions. He ate longer and faster than others, yet he never seemed to be quite satisfied, and never left the camp where he was served without casting a searching look about to see if all had been consumed.

The camps were arranged in circles, several tents being so placed as to face a fire in the center. Seated around these fires, Murphy would of an evening relate some of the most startling of tales, most of them adventures of his own in which he modestly admitted having figured, and always relating the death and scalping of some Indians by his own hand. These tales he told in a moderated tone of voice. Not an atom of braggadocio entered into his manner of

speech. To him, these horrible scenes meant nothing but duty.

When not relating escapades with the Indians, he would sing to us old ballads and songs that many of us knew and would join in. His voice was of a deep, sonorous, vibrating bass that fitted well to our outdoor surroundings. This voice that he used so effectively in singing caused me to remember the tales I had heard of the magnitude and the volume of his wonderful war-whoop. I told others of this, and in vain we all pleaded for him to give this once for our benefit. His reply was that we would hear it soon enough, and it fell to my lot to listen to it later, as I will relate further on.

At last all was in readiness for the start. We had with us as chaplain the Reverend John Gros, whose name I have mentioned before, and after his service on a Sunday, the last day of our stay here, Clinton ordered a certain number of men to take the boats from the lake and place them below the dam so that everything might be in readiness for the departure next morning. Three men were to be placed in each boat, and the remainder were to proceed by foot on either side of the river. In the morning, after the waters of the lake had been released and the start of the boats made, it having fallen to the lot of Murphy and myself to march with the army, we proceeded down the river to the great bend below, where it intersects with Schenevus Creek. *En route* I explained to him that I expected to leave the army at the point mentioned, the

point where we would spend the night, and going on foot, as my horse had been killed as related, across through the Catskills to West Point, where Washington was waiting for me to bring news of the starting of this expedition.

"Not alone, me boy," said he.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because you are not used to this country, and little know what it means to travel alone in these times. If you must go, I go with you."

"But why?" I rejoined. "You were going with this expedition, I thought."

He explained to me that as Clinton was to meet Sullivan at the Point, and there would be some delay before they got started from there, he could easily see me through to the Hudson, and get back and join the combined armies before they were ready to start west. Remonstrance was in vain; he insisted it was an obligation he owed to me and to the cause, and after mentioning it to Clinton, I consented to his going. That night Murphy sat up late, giving Clinton ideas of the river's course, and of desirable stopping places, until he should again join them.

The stars were disappearing one by one, and the sun was casting gray streaks on the horizon the next morning when Murphy aroused me and said it was time for us to be off. After a hurried breakfast, we started. The distance we were to travel was about one hundred miles by land, through an uninterrupted and interminable forest, and by a well-worn Indian

trail. After leaving Clinton, we started up the Charlotte Creek for a few miles, and, bearing up the mountain side, finally came to the head of a narrow valley. Here we spent our first night, sleeping under a canopy of pines with only our blankets under us.

I shall not attempt to describe this trip entire. To me it was an entirely new experience, and with aching limbs, foot-sore and weary, I was glad each night when Murphy would ask if we should not stop here or there for the night, pointing to some place he had selected.

Passing through a break in the mountains, a place the Indians called the "Great Gorge," we came toward the summit, where Murphy decided that we would spend our second night. Our camp we made between two springs, he explaining that one was the head waters of the Esopus Creek, that flowed into the Hudson, and the other found its outlet through the Delaware River and the Bay. Soon after our arrival we saw a rare and grand sight. The sun was just setting and on both sides of the valley below was kissing the tops of the mountains a last good-night. Away up the side of one peak a cloud had strayed, and the sun's last rays illuminating it made it to look like a great thing of fire. While we were gazing at the cloud, it lifted, and we viewed the beauties of the peak beyond. "A good omen," said Murphy. "It means success for you or me in some shape."

I stood transfixed for some time, when noticing that Tim was busy preparing a shelter for the night, I turned and started to build a fire over which to cook

some meat, as that day we had the luck to kill a deer. The remark Murphy had made of the cloud bringing good luck to us had reminded me of my troubles, and once more I felt the old pain. Little did I believe in it, for if good luck were mine, I am sure my conditions would have been otherwise than they were at present.

Murphy, noticing what I was about, admonished me not to do it, as Esopus, now not far away, was a Tory stronghold, and bands of marauders might be prowling near us, and be attracted by the fire's light, and so we ate of the remaining corn-bread that we had brought from Clinton's commissary.

As we were about to unfold our blankets for sleep, the evening shadows meanwhile dissolving themselves into darkness, my attention was drawn to the glow a fire farther down the valley was sending out, lighting up the mountain's side and causing trees above it to look like somber ghosts of nature. Murphy, too, saw the fire, and his eye dilated. Although it was now quite dark, and only a few stars had made themselves noticeable, by their dim light I saw a look in those eyes and on his face as was never equaled by the look of hatred on the physiognomy of any Roman who might have been witnessing the destruction of Christians in the arena.

"There is Injuns down there," he hissed; "few white men pass this trail in times like these. They are Injuns sure. Now, me boy, go to sleep, and I will go down and see."

Away he went, and soon enough I was fast asleep.

Soon afterward I was awakened by a yell or whoop that roused me bolt upright on my bed. Its loudness and intensity was mighty, and would have awakened the Seven Sleepers. Its echo reverberated from mountain top to mountain top, and was hurled back again, and seemed to me like the mingling of the yells of a thousand demons incarnate. It startled not only me, but birds and beasts alike. Owls upon the mountain side set up their mournful cry and a wolf glided by me in lengthy bounds, giving forth his yelps of terror.

But the long marches we had made on the previous day had been so fatiguing that notwithstanding my marrow had frozen at the wild yell that aroused me, I was soon asleep again. I recall being awakened later by the sound of footfalls, and rubbing my eyes, indistinctly saw Tim crawling on the bough bed beside me.

The next morning, on awakening, I beheld him already up, and cutting two notches in the stock of his famous double-barreled gun. By his side and from the belt dangled two scalps. Their sight sickened me, and this feeling was not diminished a few minutes later when we passed by the camp the Indians had occupied the night before and saw that already wolves had found the bodies of the slain, and were now quarreling over the division of the spoils. I discharged my rifle at the foremost one, killing him, while the others fled in terror. Going up to the bodies, I felt in the ammunition boxes they both wore, and from

each I drew a paper that, upon opening, I discovered to be like unto one I had seen before—it was a copy of the reward offered for my scalp by Sir Henry Clinton, a reward that, although the Indians could not read, its import they must have known.

CHAPTER XX

CONVERSATION WITH WASHINGTON

For a day or two I loitered about headquarters at West Point, where Murphy and I had found the general awaiting me, resting and preparing for my new duties of which I knew not as yet their nature. I was soon to learn, for on a day, two days after Murphy's departure, General Washington, after inviting me into his private room, said, "I bade you come back here, VanHorn, as I wished your services in other matters than the Indian expedition you have just quitted. I have been looking about some time for a man who not only possesses courage, but also reticence, ability, and a degree of subterfuge. You seem to be imbued with plenty of courage; anyway, the letter from Colonel Gansevoort so stated; sagacity have you in plenty, aye, and I doubt not but you are the man I desire."

"I am at your service," I replied.

"I have a post to be filled, a post that not only constantly imperils the incumbent, but places him under responsibilities so arduous that none but nerves of steel could withstand the strain. I am not going to insist that you accept this place. I have explained something of its dangers; these explanations are self-evident of its importance. As reticence was men-

tioned by me as a required factor in him who fills the place, I am impelled to exercise reticence as to this place and the details of its responsibilities until I have your answer of acceptance. Knowing what little you do about it, will you accept?"

"How can I do otherwise, knowing that my commander desires it?"

"Thanks," as he took my hand. "I knew you would; I will explain. Although our first attempt to establish a secret service in New York after its occupancy by the enemy ended in the death of noble Hale, yet plenty of good and loyal men afterward volunteered to this undertaking, and the result has been the establishment of a service so efficient and complete that I might reveal to you the movements by days of that personage who there commands. That is, I can tell you whether he drove or walked about in exercising yesterday morning or how or where he passed the entire day.

"I have trusted you so far, leaving out all admonitions of secrecy; now I tell you that, excepting those in my employ in this service, only one other here knows of this matter, so may you understand the importance of secrecy and the weight of my revelations.'

"The head of the bureau in New York to-day is a man who was trusted to the extent of fullest confidence by Lord Howe, and later by the present incumbent, Clinton. He is a man whom the enemy would least suspect, one who so carefully fills his present situation as to avoid suspicion, stands well the strain under which he

labors, and falters not, nor complains. His fortitude is tremendous, while the wisdom he exhibits in dealing with the situation is admirable. When I mention his name you will know him, for his assumed loyal attitude toward royalty has been marked; while his assumed bitterness toward us has startled those who knew only his exterior as well as those who understood his inner intent.

"As I said, only one other here shares the secrets, and that one has been, by the vituperation hurled at us through a news sheet this agent manages, convinced or nearly so, that its editor, James Rivington, is no longer our friend and trusted herald; on the contrary, by reason of his environment, he has changed his views, even though as yet he still sends me reliable information. Rivington possesses the deepest cunning and most sagacity of any man I have ever met, making these surmises possible; but personally I do not believe them. However, safety points but one way—one under suspicion; two must be placed that one can know and report the other's movements. For this reason, I wish you to enter New York and acquaint yourself with this man, engaging with him as helper on the *Royal Gazette*, sharing with him all affairs pertaining to the service, carefully watching all his movements, satisfying yourself of his earnestness or otherwise, and report to me through the channel by which you will enter or leave the city. This latter is only a precautionary measure.

"Fortunately Rivington recently wrote me that he

wished assistance in his business from someone who would share the responsibility and dangers. I replied that you would come soon. The matter of suspicion came up some time ago, but I bided, fearing the effect on Rivington should he know he was watched. Now the matter can be carried out with impunity. You will therefore prepare yourself and go at once. Later I will instruct you how to enter the city."

So I was to enter New York as a spy. Enter the city, the military commander of which had put a price on my head; enter within the confines of the city where now lived he who had prompted that offer and where also I supposed was Jeanne; yet I complained not. I had promised to go, and go I would, believing somehow that it were best, knowing that to refuse meant to lose my own respect and that of the man who had requested me to go.

It may be well to make here some statement of the man with whom I was to deal, James Rivington. Born in England, he had early come to this country and engaged in journalism, owning and operating newspapers in New York for many years. At the outbreak of the war, he was publishing the *New York Gazette*, but on the coming of the enemy he had apparently changed his views and had since published the *Royal Gazette*. This change of sentiment on his part made him the target of sarcastic and satirically inclined editors of the small rebel press of the country.

Rivington not only had published his own bombastic writings, but others contributed by whom it mattered

not, as long as these articles were sensitized with cutting and odious sarcasms. Naturally, therefore, I was surprised at the information I had just received, that under this veneer, he was really rebellious at heart and insincere in his profession, and that while pouring the hot shot of cynicism into the colonials, yet he was in sentiment as they were, and was a spy of Washington's and reported to him daily.

Following out the instructions given me, I donned the guise of a farmer, in which a full beard that I had recently grown figured, and went through our lines to the neutral ground, that place lying between the American camp at the north and the British lines just above King's Bridge to the south, and occupied by farmers upon whose produce both armies at times foraged.

Safety demanded that I make my way on foot to the home of one Defoe, a dealer in produce, ostensibly a Royalist, who really was a lieutenant of the circuit that furnished information to Washington.

Rivington, it seemed, aside from his newspaper affairs, was a dealer in the same commodities as Defoe. This latter enterprise was tolerated by Rivington only as a necessity, for by it was he able to pass his information through the outpost of the British at King's Bridge. Defoe acting as purchasing agent drew each day, or as the case might necessitate, a load of his commodities into the city, having a pass to so trade, bearing in or out such messages as he was intrusted with, some sealed papers, but mostly of a verbal char-

acter, and by him I was to be transported from without into the city of mine enemies.

Finding Defoe and having no trouble to establish my worthiness of his confidence through a secret word only known to the few within the circle, I passed the night with him, and early next morning was on my way to take up a position much more hazardous than running before the Indians near Fort Stanwix.

The sentry posted at the King's Bridge was, as were all others to whose care the outposts of the city were intrusted, a Tory, who knew Defoe, but scrutinized me closely as he asked for my pass. Defoe, interfering, said, "This man is my assistant; he will help me in unloading this hay and will remain inside as the assistant of Mr. James Rivington; surely he can pass."

Supplementing his words with a move into his pocket, he placed a crown in the other's hand and we passed on. Ah, the consistency of these Tories! But perhaps it was the name of Rivington, that name magical to all Royalists, that obviated any embarrassment of delay instead of the money.

Moving down the island to the city at its south, we entered Broadway, and finally taking a side street, we came to some barns that served the purpose, as before stated, and disposed of our load. Then Defoe conducted me to the establishment of Rivington, a house facing Hanover Square, the lower part of which was used for his enterprise and the second floor front room utilized as an office, and the remainder as living apartments.

CHAPTER XXI

WITHIN THE ENEMY'S CITY

Climbing up the stairs and entering this office, Defoe introduced me as soon as Rivington had bidden an assistant there depart. Defoe withdrawing, Rivington's splendid countenance took on a look of pleasure.

"Mr. VanHorn," he said, "I welcome you; the strain of my environments is great, and you will lift some of the load from my shoulders."

"I will scarce be able to assist you in your editorial duties, but if sharing the heavy responsibilities of your obligation to others will assist you, I will do so gladly."

At my reference to these responsibilities to others he raised his hand, and said, "I do not care about discussing our affairs here, for even walls have ears, but as you will, I hope, live with me here, we can and will later discuss our affairs and prospects in the seclusion of these rooms at night when in no danger of eavesdroppers. I welcome you here, and bid you share the meager comforts of my home."

As I said, the second floor, save for the office, was used as living-rooms, wherein my host and his wife lived, and there amidst its luxuriant furnishings that

evening we became acquainted, and the weight of our work detailed to me farther than I already knew.

For many days, the boldness which I was obliged to assume, thereby avoiding suspicion, was hard always to remember and carry out; but soon my duties once established absorbed my interest to that extent that boldness became natural. I was made acquainted with the force that, ignorant of the mission of their employer, assisted on the *Gazette*, busied myself with light office work, and went nearly every day to meet Defoe, reimbursing him for his produce, and giving or receiving from him stealthily such information as passed the British lines. Of the latter there was not much, for Mr. Rivington learned of the intent of Clinton for future operations, and but few moves were made that were not known to Washington before they had been executed.

As I became more in touch with the man I was to watch, I became each day impressed with his great knowledge, his evasiveness, and secrecy. Subtle was he to the limit, and yet my close observation failed to detect any manner or way in which he was not acting as Washington believed. I did not venture to inspect the city, for everywhere was to be found the soldier-guard, my enemy, who, as I thought, lay in wait for me, and save for the almost daily trips to meet Defoe, I was inside our place.

One day in looking over items that would next day appear in the *Gazette*, I noticed the name "Lieutenant Hastings." Being sure Gilbert was meant, that

evening I asked Mr. Rivington, "What about this Lieutenant Hastings whose name appears in to-morrow's *Gazette*?"

"I know him, and this much do I know of him, he is most fortunate in the friendship of Sir Henry Clinton, so much so that they say, next to André, Hastings has Clinton's favor."

"How gained Hastings his lieutenancy; what has enabled him to succeed so well with Clinton?"

"Ah, my boy, he wins not advancement through fame by the sword, but through a more subtle agent—the tongue. He has so won confidence that to-day he has the affairs of the commissariat under his care, leaving the poor commissary guessing who holds his position."

"Does Hastings have the means to keep apace with those of his acquaintance?"

"Does he have means! Why, if you were vested with what he has spent in the last year, you would not complain of poverty."

"How does he thrive so well?"

"Did I not say that he managed the commissary?" said he blandly. "Well, that is enough; Hastings will care for himself should he have the chance, and there's no better chance that could come to him. Besides, man, he lives with Clinton, André, and other officers at No. 1 Broadway, where they say large stakes are each night placed on the cards and dice, and 'tis claimed that Hastings has never lost. His winnings, be the report true, would suffice to keep him well

supplied with money. In spite of his vices, he is the best known and most admired of the younger officers in the city, excepting Major André."

"That reminds me," he continued, "of gossip I heard repeated the other day at Fraunce's Tavern. It ran like this, that André was a rival of Lieutenant Hasting for the hand of a Miss Mortier, who with her mother is living here as a sort of protégée of Hastings, I believe. I have met the ladies once and the daughter in charm and beauty merits nothing short of such a lover as André might make. But this, as I said, is only gossip. You seem to be interested in Hastings. Do you know him?"

I considered a moment and answered, "Yes." Then I told him of the relations of Gilbert and myself, omitting any reference to Jeanne.

"Watch," said he, "that you do not come in contact with Hastings, for he might betray you, or perhaps not, seeing you were reared under the same rafters."

I laughed. "Why, Mr. Rivington, three months ago he prompted Clinton to put a price on my head. He would give me over at once, did he know of my presence."

"I now recall," said Rivington, "that we printed the notices of reward. I thought when I first heard your name that it was familiar. Now I remember, Lieutenant Hastings himself came with an order from Clinton for them. It was such a departure that I saved a copy and have it here now," as he unlocked a

secretary and drew forth a paper that I recognized. "And you came here knowing this. But why this antagonism toward you?"

I did not reply at once.

"Oh," he said, "Miss Mortier, I understand. But you should not stay here. You endanger me by so doing."

"No, I am, if discovered, but a spy who has worked himself into your confidence. You would be exonerated. Personally I prefer to go, but one whom we both serve requested me to come here, and here I will, with your consent, stay."

A few days later the notices of the *Gazette* contained an announcement of an officers' ball at the John Street Play House. I put aside for the time my fear of detection, and on the appointed evening, after making inquiry as to its location, stationed myself among the rabble already gathered in front and witnessed the coming of the patrons of the ball at this named place.

Soon from a carriage that had stopped in front of the entrance emerged Gilbert, followed by Jeanne and her mother. As they came along the approach, I drew back, partially beyond the others, but where I could see without being seen. As they passed me, the cloak she wore dropped from over Jeanne's shoulder, and revealed the plumpness of her arm, the symmetry of neck and shoulder. Gilbert drew back the cloak, and the Madame looked pleased, while I felt a faintness of heart, for this *décolleté* exposure nearly stifled my

thoughts, as the blood left my face and brain. I felt as though it were my duty to protest against these measures of immodesty, which society puts upon its members, but in my present position I knew the fruitlessness of such an idea. Besides seeing the falling cloak, I had observed that Jeanne had grown more beautiful since I last saw her. Maturity had but enhanced the brilliancy of her charms, but withal I thought she looked unhappy. Did she, or was I mistaken?

CHAPTER XXII

CALLED UPON TO BRING PAUL'S OFFER

Inviting me into the privacy of his own office one day early in the fall of 1780, Mr. Rivington informed me that my services were required by the Commander-in-Chief of our forces, and I was to make haste and repair to him at once. He had made all the necessary arrangements. Defoe was again to bring a load of hay into the town, and I, dressed as a farmer, was to go to the northern outpost and meet him and proceeding, assist in placing the hay in Mr. Rivington's barn. This move was to allay the suspicion of the guard, and by so doing pass safely out.

The strain under which I had been for a year was severe; my weight had declined appreciably, and I was not as hale as before. Besides, I had wished if possible to forget her of whom you are already familiar, yet her presence seemed to follow me. Considering these things, I was not at all sorry to depart. In fact I was overjoyed to think that now I was to go away. Day by day I had been taunted of my loss by seeing Jeanne and Gilbert driving, sometimes in company with others, though generally accompanied by her mother. Rumor connected her first with Gilbert and then with André as a suitor. Her name was among

those given as attending picnics, parties, receptions, and the like. To witness all this was exasperating to my overwrought feelings.

The day following Mr. Rivington's notification was set as the one for me to depart. Arising early, I made my way to the building occupied by his enterprise. In the same office, as told of, I made my change of garments, donning the ones already provided and awaiting me there. Thus equipped, I felt sure that my disguise as a farmer was secure.

Proceeding to an eating house, I had breakfast. While eating I overheard one of the porters tell another that "truly them farmers air early risers." Feeling secure as to my disguise, I proceeded to the outpost, where I had no trouble in carrying out the programme arranged, and in accompanying Defoe to his home. I started the next day for Tarrytown. Nothing befell me, and on the next day I entered the general's presence.

How changed he was—this solemn, even-tempered man, whose patriotism the sufferings of Valley Forge had not cooled nor slackened his ardor. This man, who, in the midst of that terrible winter had marshaled his forces on Christmas eve, and, crossing the river, had dealt the enemy a stunning blow. If then he had exhibited nerves of steel, now all was changed, for his manner was uneasy. In him now was not to be seen the valiant debonair, the unquaking heroism that so marked him then. What did it mean?

"VanHorn," he said, as he greeted me across our

interlocked hands, "from the enemy we expect opposition, occasionally defeat, but when from our own ranks there come echoes of dissension and even dismemberment, it is more than I can bear." He continued, "The harvests of the country this year have been abundant, yet want reigns in the camp of its defenders. Selfishness has superseded patriotism, and the Congress has exerted its powers with too little vigor."

"What do you fear, sir?" I asked, as bravely as I could, thinking my manner might reassure him.

"It can be summed thus," he bitterly said, "mutiny. In my heart I do not place upon those rebellious as much blame as upon the emissaries of the enemy, who have persistently pointed to the distresses of my soldiers, thinking by this to dissuade them in their loyalty. But now, when in our darkest hour, to have this happen would be terribly disastrous to our cause. To be sure, our men are unpaid for months back, are deplorably naked, and can scarcely be blamed for their dissatisfaction. The Congress are always lax, and at present helplessly so. There is talk of their making an appropriation later, but allowing that they do, they cannot furnish gold or silver. And even before this relief comes, if it does at all, everything may be lost. Worrisome days and sleepless nights have I spent in casting about for some measure of relief. Thus far these efforts have been fruitless. Recently I thought of the letter you handed me upon your return from the Sullivan expedition, from one of your neighboring

settlers along the Mohawk, who signs himself 'Paul Manning.'

"This letter contained an enclosure in the shape of an inner note. The latter I will show you after you peruse the former." Handing me a well-worn and soiled piece of paper that plainly showed it to have been written some time previous, and which I recognized as the one Paul Manning had months before impressed me to deliver, I unfolded it and on the reverse side read thus:

To General George Washington,

Commander of the Armies of the United Colonies of America:

Most Honored Sir:—The contents of the inner epistle enclosed is not to be opened or read by you until, tired and worn in spirit, hopelessly cast down, and relentlessly pursued by adverse conditions, you find yourself at the darkest period of your career as commander of our armies.

When all seems but lost, and the future is a black, blank possibility, then, Sir, you are to break the inner seal and comply with the directions there indicated.

Most obediently yours,

Paul Manning.

What could it mean, and why had I been summoned? Was I to have any part in what was to follow? Aye, and what was to follow? I was not long in waiting for my answer, for the silent man before me handed me the other note, the contents of which I read.

Gen. George Washington,

Commander of the Armies of the United Colonies of America:

Most Honored Sir:—Days, months, and perhaps years have passed since first you received my note, sent by my esteemed and

true friend, Henry VanHorn, containing this as an enclosure. But if the intervening time has been long and if your wonderment at its contents has grown during this time, I hope and pray you, sir, that the message it bears will be so welcome, so far-reaching in its meaning as to give you ample reward for the time you have waited ere reading its contents. To not all of us is given the privilege of assisting in this our just and honored strife. Much as many who are inactive in this conflict would like to be performing valiant work in the field, or in other ways, yet some by reason of home ties, business affairs, or perhaps old age, are incapacitated from actual aggressive participation. Of the latter, unfortunately, I am, and, believe me, sir, when I declare that were it not for my three score ten and more years, I should be on the field with you. But if I am not to partake of and experience the exigencies of war, I wish to subscribe to its ways, and can only do so by furnishing some of its sinews.

When that valiant leader of old marched his forces through the almost impregnable difficulties that beset him, the power of Omnipotence intervened, and heaven shed down its manna for their sustenance. Now that a modern Moses has undertaken a similar pilgrimage, I ask you, sir, that I may be permitted to contribute a substantial amount of manna in the guise of English banknotes for the relief of your distressed army.

You will notice that at the time of this writing, I am presumptuous somewhat as to my offer. But in time and before this victory shall be finally conceded, I realize only too well that the army's condition will warrant its acceptance.

With only the meager resources this new and poverty-ridden-by-tax country has supporting it, this time is certain to appear. Nothing but the appearance of this condition will prompt you to break the seal of this document. Reverses and defeats will be met by you with calm and disdain. But when you see your army ready to capitulate or mutiny by reason of nakedness, and the gaunt wolf of starvation grimly grins in at the door of your soldiers' tents, then you will comply with this request, I am sure.

The only condition under which I make this bequest is that the original bearer of this note, Henry VanHorn, if spared by

the God of battles until the time of this reading, accompanied by another whom you may choose, will make the journey to my habitation in the Mohawk country, procure and bring to you my contribution. If the same VanHorn be dead, you may substitute another equally as conscientious and as trustworthy as he.

When necessity comes upon you, delay not, for I will know of your condition and will await your messengers.

May God bless and reward your efforts.

Yours obediently as before,

PAUL MANNING.

I was dumbfounded. Paul Manning able to contribute sufficiently for the relief of an army?—preposterous. But then he was not a man to write trifling notes, and surely he must have meant what he said. Momentarily I found myself confronted with the question—how came he in possession of such means? Surely the piratical story must be true. "Paul, Paul," I cried mentally, "you of all men an impostor. You, who were always my ideal gentleman, were all these years a living lie. I spurned to believe the stories concerning you, and while you never denied them, yet by evasion and subterfuge you led me into believing you innocent. But now, I see you as conscience stricken and about to die, you wish to apply your illegally acquired money to a good cause, and by so doing make reparation for the crime of piracy, and perhaps murder, as one follows the other generally."

"Well," the voice of the man before me brought my thoughts and attention back to the present. "It was this that prompted me to send for you," he continued. "You know Paul Manning?"

"Since my infancy."

"Is his fortune large that he can thus come to our aid?"

"I never knew, sir, that he possessed any means," I replied, "and I knew him better, perhaps, than anyone else. He was the friend of my childhood, the guide of my youth."

"How could he be wealthy, and you not mistrust? Knowing him so well, why should he wish to conceal it from you?"

Here I related the story, as told years before by the settler who came through our valley, concerning Paul's early history, nor did I spare him in the least; told of his accompanying my father home from Albany and how then he did not care whither he went so long as he could be in peace.

"Of him little else is known," I finished.

"Has his conduct since you knew him suggested in any way that his former days were clouded with crime? Does he not sometimes gave way to utterances that mark him as having been an outlaw?"

"On the contrary," said I, defending my friend, "he has ever been, since I knew him, a model of goodness. He has lived a life unblemished; he never retaliated against those who have wronged him. Silently and with fortitude did he bear the calumny heaped upon him after his story was told. Neither blamed he the teller nor the repeater of the tale."

"'Tis a strange story indeed," said Washington, "and stranger still that a man after hoarding and

misering over his crime-acquired wealth, now offers to freely contribute it to our cause. One can but admire the man's sacrifices and the principle he enunciates when he makes the offer. What shall we do about it?" he continued.

I mused for some time before answering, "The army are in hard straits, sir."

"Just so," he said, "and, besides, there is no proof that your old friend really procured his money in an unwarranted way."

"How else, sir?" I said.

The reply came quickly, "Even if so, the funds can or never will be placed in the hands of those from whom they were extracted. These same funds are now idle, and applied to our interest will do untold good, pending the time of the appropriation from the Congress. Think you not it best for you to go on the journey, VanHorn?" continuing he said.

"As you say," I replied, thinking meanwhile how Paul Manning would again face me, after having the story of his life confirmed, or nearly so.

"Who will assist you?" asked Washington.

Meditating for a few moments, his name came to me. Suddenly I said, "Tim Murphy."

"The very man," said he. "None better could be chosen."

"Your approval of him makes it necessary for me to suggest that before he acts in this capacity he must first be found. Having long since returned with Clinton, it is fair to assume that he is now at warfare some-

where and more than likely in his own country. My route northward will be by the Hudson River. Can you send a scout up the Susquehanna to notify Murphy to come to Canajoharie at once?"

"Yes," he said, "we have a man with us from near the Susquehanna headwaters named Parris. I will dispatch him at once, if you are to start soon."

"Yes, at once."

We discussed at some length the route which Murphy and I would traverse in bringing the treasure back. It was decided finally that the Susquehanna and Delaware trail from Paul's location furnished by far the safest and the most expedient course. Further it was decided that Robert Morris be made acquainted with the contents of Paul's letter, and told that the funds would soon be placed in his hands, and that he secretly was to dispense these funds *pro rata* according to the distress of the different divisions. Furthermore, as Washington and I, at my request, had pledged ourselves to secrecy as to the source from whence was to come this blessing, we decided to enjoin Robert Morris to secrecy also.

Unhesitatingly, I started the next morning on my trip to the northland. Strange it was, indeed, to me. I could scarcely believe my own thoughts. When I had last seen Paul Manning, I left him, as I supposed, poor in purse, and rich only in honesty and uprightness. Returning now, I bore with me the proof of his ample resources and of his lawlessness and insidiousness. Yet glad was I to again feel the unpolluted air

of the country and to know that on my mission I was materially aiding our own cause and was not acting the despicable part of a spy at present, and hopeful that on my return I would not again be assigned to my former perilous post. Not dreading the peril to which I was exposed, not caring for the death that awaited me if suspected and condemned, but dreading again the proximity to Jeanne. Now that the hoped for death was not to be mine, I only asked that distance separate us.

With Paul's letter as a token by which I was to make my mission known to him, I reached Albany by boat, here procured a horse of General Schuyler, and in less than two days thereafter I was again within the surroundings of my boyhood days.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE RETURN WITH THE TREASURE

Expedient in the matter of time as I had been, consuming only six days on my homeward journey, yet the messenger Parris had been even more expedient, for on my arrival, after the kisses, tears, and tender exclamations of my mother, the hearty handshake and glad welcome of my stepfather, stanch Tory that he was, though families were divided, though brothers engaged in hand-to-hand conflicts and neighbors were estranged by reason of conflicting interpretations of justice, and though James Hastings was as ardent a supporter of one side as I was of the other, yet our friendship was enduring and remained unbroken until his death, there loomed before me in the kitchen door, the bulky form of my happy Irish friend, Timothy Murphy.

"Arrah! arrah!" he said, "bedad here is the Lieutenant at last. Mighty glad to see ye, Hennery. How be ye? I coomed at onced on gettin' the Gineral's wourd. What's in yer mind now, and what have I wid th' deal?"

"Well, Tim, your questions are so numerous, you cannot expect me to answer all at once. As to myself, I am well."

"Ye don't look it, me boy."

"No, indeed," said mother. "Henry," she con-

tinued, "you are thin indeed." Coming close to me, she observed the gray that now fringed my temples slightly, and exclaimed, "Gray, too, but if a few gray hairs are the worst that has happened to you, I am satisfied."

"Aye," said Tim. "If gray hairs were the only loss suffered by us pleased indade would I be. For myself, I have not aven as yit got thim. By the by, Hennery, did ye know I was morried since I life yez at West Point? Yis, 'tis true. One fine gal, too, Hennery. Yez sees, her father, an old cuss at Schoharie, objected to me, sid I was a schalpin spalpeen outlaw. So we skipped away and was morried, and her paw wanted her bock sure enough, and begorra I said, noo, noo, she is mine and I will take her wid me, and there ye air. Hennery, if iver a gal's paw or maw objects to yez, git the gal fust and sittle wid de old folks later."

This reminded me of Jeanne and her duty, as she saw it, to her maternal parent. My mind as well as face clouded.

Tim on seeing my change of demeanor said, "Haw, haw, haw, haw, I bet yez regret that ye didn't follow me, youngster, fer ye must had a gal some time, hay, son?"

I did not reply to this, but observed my mother's concentrated attention fixed upon me, as she listened to Tim's thrust regarding myself. Surely, methought, leaving her behind does not always rid one of taunts of a woman he has lost, that although unintended are

so real as to wound as keenly as her presence. Knowing Tim's good nature, and that he knew not of what he spake, I could not resent his remark.

Here, fortunately, Billy entered, his shambling gait identifying him in the fast gathering gloom. The old fellow rapidly advanced toward me, embraced me, and weepingly remarked, "I knowed it, Mars Henry, I knowed you was a-coming. I'se felt it for a week. I duss tole Pud dat you'd be here to see him afore he died, I'ze glad, so glad, Mars Henry."

"Why, Billy, don't give away so. Surely you must be a wizard to read that I was to return so soon. But about your friend whom you call Pud. Surely if he is near death's door, I will see him at once."

"Oh, no, Mars Henry, Pud will keep until I dun sticks de nife in his frote."

Then I saw that Billy's friend "Pud" was his pig.

I asked, "Is Pud larger and fatter than your pigs of former years?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "he's the bestest, biggest, fattest, gruntiest pig I ever——"

"There, there, Billy, good-by; to-morrow I will talk with you and see Pud."

Here mother announced that supper was ready. Murphy and I passed the supper hour and the balance of the evening in discussing such happenings as could be discussed without inciting the wrath of James Hastings. Once or twice Tim inquired what our mission was, but I put him off each time by saying that in due time he would know.

I had been discreet in the discussion of my own experiences, for I did not wish, for obvious reasons, anyone to know of my presence in New York as a spy. Though trusting those present, yet I might again return to the same post under the same conditions. My stepfather intimated to me that he knew full well that our visit had to do with someone in the neighborhood, and suspected we were in quest of some Tory who had been audacious enough to secrete himself with friends or relatives. Many Tories of note, including the notorious Jo Bettys and others equally notorious, had been taken from friendly neighbors and hanged recently, and thus it was easy for him to believe this our mission. He counseled me to desist, saying that such acts were little short of murder.

As this suited my purpose, I allowed him to think thus, and so defended myself by retorting that death and not torture was the end of Tories captured by us, and that Indians were not employed to assist in any barbarous mutilation of our captives.

During the evening I thought many times of Paul Manning; wondered if he had seen me pass his door, and if so, why he did not come out and greet us, as travelers were scarce, at least by his door, and the perilous times made all people the more observant of travelers. Methought that he felt exactly as I did about the matter, *i. e.*, there was now no secret between us so far as he was concerned and discussion might lead us farther apart, and it was better for us to meet first when the business pertaining to my visit alone

would be considered. On the morrow, I bade Murphy pass the day as best he could, and intimated that the evening would find us busily engaged. The forenoon I passed in looking over my farm, for long ere this I had reached my majority and had come into its possession. Its condition was not such as to please me, for aside from taking a living from its soil, nothing had been done in the way of clearing or betterments. After that inspection, Billy's pig next occupied my attention, and its condition was such that I remarked to Billy that it was gratifying to see at least one thing about the place looking prosperous.

Up to the present I had not, excepting the time of the reference by Murphy to my possible sweetheart, felt the barrenness, the emptiness of this country as on my last visit here. I had passed her former home scarcely noticing it; I had traversed the same hill leading to my home over which we had coasted as children, without a thought of those halcyon days; the exuberance I experienced by being away from or near her presence and to be relieved of my position in New York overcame my formerly everpresent gloomy moods. Were it not for the knowledge of Paul Manning's perfidy, I should have been perhaps semi-happy.

Toward evening feeling that it would be best for me to see Paul and make arrangements for our departure later with the treasure, I alone went to his place. Nothing was to be seen of him at window or door. As friendship was a past factor between us and as business now alone drew us together, he appeared not to

greet me, so I pushed on to the door and knocked. To prove that he had been watching and knew of my coming, the door opened simultaneously with my knock.

"Come in, Henry," said he, his voice hoarse and broken. "Come in. I am glad to see you," he continued. "It seems an age since last we met, my boy."

Cruelly I reminded him that it was a trifling fifteen months. By this time he had closed the door and extended to me his hand. Taking it and giving him a slight pressure, I noted his ashen-gray face, from which the ruddiness of yore had disappeared.

Truly, I thought, conscientious pangs must be racking to so change a man's features as Paul has changed since last I saw him.

"I am glad to see you, my boy," he repeated. My disgust for his former occupation arose within me, and I could not answer in the same vein, but finally I managed to inquire how he had fared since last I visited him.

"Badly, badly, Henry, indeed."

Conscience, I again thought, but made no audible inquiry as to why he had thus fared. I handed him the letter—the same one he had sent by me to Washington.

"What about my mission here, Paul Manning? Is everything in readiness for me?"

A pallor overspread his face as he quakingly answered, "Yes, yes, all is ready."

"To-night then I start back. I will be here at about the rise of the moon. Good-by, sir," I finished.

"All will be ready," he said, as I passed out.

Perhaps I had treated him better than he deserves, I asked myself on my way back. For his deception placed him beyond the recognition of honest men. The idea that I might be unjustly censuring him did not figure in my conjectures, for he had furnished the proof of his own guilt. And if guilty, punishment greater than coldness did he merit, even though now he were penitent and trying to wipe out the great injustice done to society by contributing unsavory gains to a just cause.

The evening came on soon enough, and, speaking to Murphy, we made ready to depart. Further than this, he knew naught of my intentions or purpose. I had explained to mother that we would soon leave; she communicated this to others and a choice supper was prepared for us.

During this and for the balance of the evening I experienced a degree of nervousness about our departure and as to our ability to protect ourselves should we be attacked by any who wished to dispute with us the ownership of the treasure. I figured that our safety lay in two things. None knew our secret, and if so, Murphy was dexterous as any four or five with whom we might come in contact.

Going to the window, I noticed the moon's silvery streaks showing themselves over the eastern hills to warn us that our departure was at hand. Amidst the entreaties of my mother to again visit her soon, and the sage counsel of my stepfather cautioning me that my

mission was dangerous, we bade them good-by and were off, leaving the horse of General Schuyler to be called for later by a soldier sent for it.

Passing down the Canajoharie for some distance, I meanwhile telling Murphy of what we were to do, we halted and retraced our steps to Paul Manning's doorway; this move was to deceive those of my home should they be watching our departure.

We slowly entered Paul's gate; not a light was to be seen, but ere we had touched the door it softly opened and we entered. Beckoning us toward an inner door through which a muffled light now was to be seen, though invisible from the outside, Paul led the way; Murphy came next, and I, after closing the door, followed.

The ground floor of Paul's house was made up of four rooms. He had built the house for his own convenience and it was well suited to his necessities, consisting of a front room, a large kitchen, pantry, and one sleeping-room.

The front or reception-room was rarely used, as his guests outside of myself had been few. I do not know of anyone else ever being within its walls. Next came the kitchen, spacious and well lighted by many windows. At the back of this kitchen was a fireplace with a door opening on either side, the room at the right being a sleeping-room, the one at the left being the pantry. After we were ushered into the kitchen, the pale light before mentioned could be seen shedding its dim rays through the doorway of the bedroom.

Paul silently led the way into this room. 'Twas plain that he would dispense with all formalities and get down to the matter in hand at once. He had previously arranged three chairs around the room, all facing a large chest that had been dragged, as the floor marks proved, to its present resting place. Simultaneously we were seated, and silence prevailed for a little time.

Finally Paul inquired, "Shall we get at matters at once?"

"At once," I echoed.

"You and your friend assist me then," he said. "In my younger days I handled yon chest with ease, but now the exertion of dragging it from its resting place from under the bed to where you now see it nearly exhausted me."

"What shall we do?" I inquired.

"Turn it on its side," this as he produced a screw-driver. We turned it on its side as he requested, I pondering as to whether it was the same chest I had heard that my father brought with Paul from Albany. As if to confirm my divination, he said, "Your father, Henry, has also lifted on this chest."

Meanwhile he had loosed the screws in the bottom, beckoning Murphy and myself to turn it back and lift it upright. The weight was very appreciably lessened by reason of a small iron box, some fifteen inches square, remaining on the floor. Producing a key he inserted it in the lock; it creaked as the rust crusts

gave away. After tugging and prying loose the lid, he slowly raised it.

No wonder that Murphy gave out a "Good Gord!" as the contents were made visible, for there before our eyes was to be seen this same iron box, literally filled with Bank of England notes, the denominations of which were twenty, fifty, and one hundred pounds. The sight that evoked profanity from Murphy struck me dumb. I finally regained my breath in little gasps. Unconsciously I articulated, "A freebooter's surfeit."

The reproachful look from Paul as tears streamed down his face transformed me into a condition of penitence for my remark.

"Make haste, Paul," I cried, anxious to have this scene over.

Dropping on his knees, the tears continuing to flow and falling on the crisp notes, as he counted, he drew from the chest note after note until at last he repeated the enumeration of his count out loud, "Eight thousand pounds." "Eight thousand pounds," I repeated, as trembling like a leaf I took up the flat leathern packet (the handiwork of Paul, I thought) into which he had deposited the money, and suspending it from my shoulder under my coat, made ready to depart. As all that had taken place had been done in our presence, we could not but look upon the interior of the iron case.

Its inner space was necessarily small, and I had noticed consisted of different compartments. After the money in the upper one had been removed, there was

"Dropping on his knees, ... he drew from the chest note after note."

revealed a lid or cover of iron extending over and completely covering what was underneath. At this juncture Paul again resorted to the bunch of keys, inserted one in its receptive keyhole, and drew off this lid. Again we saw money in profusion. This he repeated twice. As the bottom of the third compartment was reached, I found myself wondering if there were more compartments and more money, but at this point he mentioned the sum and total of his account, and replacing the lids requested us to assist in placing the box under the false bottom of the chest. This being done, he extended his hand, and as I pressed it, gently said, "Good-by. What you have seen let it remain inviolate in your breast so long as I may live."

"I will do it, sir," I replied, and again pressed his hand, for his tears flowing at my harshness had softened me toward him. At this demonstration of my slightly changed feelings, his whole countenance brightened and his hearty "God bless you!" as we passed out rang in my ears for many days.

As prearranged, we passed down the Mohawk some four miles to the Roof Tavern. I had omitted storing our knapsacks at home for obvious reason. Arousing mine host, Roof, he replenished our knapsacks to their utmost capacity. Murphy carrying the provisions and I the offering of Paul, we started on our way to Lake Otsego over the route taken by Clinton the previous summer. Not a forest sound escaped me, for the funds I carried were a constant source of uneasiness. The hooting of an owl overhead came near

causing me to fall with fear. At this Murphy gave his great laugh, which I silenced by saying, "If prowlers were near it would give them a sure notice of our presence."

"And a warning," he added.

Day was breaking as we passed through Cherry Valley, the blanched walls, the smokeless chimneys, the absence of children's voices at play, giving evidence of its awful destruction in previous times. By noon we had reached Hyde Bay. Here looking about a bit, we discovered a *bateau*, as we had expected, Murphy's instinct, trained in such matters, assisting in its discovery by causing him to investigate an innocent enough looking pile of drift-wood that had been used by others as a secreting place. After eating of our supplies we slept for some hours, or until nightfall.

As the moon rose over the hills we departed, Murphy propelling the *bateau*, I sitting in the stern, rifle in hand, on the watch. The moonbeams danced in a million mirrored spangles on the water as the soft breezes stirred the surface of the lake, all serving to bring out weird fancies and meditations. By midnight we had crossed the dam and entered the mouth of the river, this same spot with which I had had to do with before, and began the most unique and nerve-straining journey that ever fell my lot to make. As the fall rains had raised the waters and increased the current, I calculated that twenty miles each night would we cover and that ten days would suffice to bring us to our journey's end.

I was nervous, I admit, and why should I not have been, traversing a country that formerly teemed with the presence of hired savages, and with such a burden as we bore? Our only safety lay in the completeness of Sullivan's mission the previous summer, but even with no savage armies near, would not some rovers overtake us? Once only were my fears substantiated; once only did anything threatening in its character occur. This happening took place a short distance below Unadilla on the third night out. There was intense quiet, only the sound of Tim's oars being heard on the listless night air, myself nodding in the stern, he sending out great volumes of smoke as he took long pulls on his pipe, measured by the length of his stroke. Suddenly the rhythm of that stroke was broken by a rifle report, seemingly from the left bank, and a bullet sang between us, coming so close to Murphy as to stop short the stroke of his oars. Dropping these, he reached for his gun.

"No, no, Tim," I said in a low voice, "useless. Quiet and no reply is better than endangering ourselves." The moon, at this moment hiding itself behind a cloud, so covered our course that we must have been lost to the view of our would-be adversary; we passed on without further molestation, not knowing from whom came this message of defiance.

Leaving the Susquehanna at the point where it makes its "great bend," we passed a day's journey overland to the Delaware River, where the same good luck at finding a boat awaited us. Here we passed

down to the Jersey shore, when again we left the water and passed overland northeasterly to meet the Hudson.

On the tenth night out we reached our destination. Washington had summoned Mr. Robert Morris, and he, coming to the division camp at West Point, awaited our arrival. A sentry conveyed the news of our arrival to headquarters.

In the cold gray of this late November morning, the commander, accompanied by Mr. Morris, crossed the river and greeted us, shall I say cordially? No, it is not the word. Fairly overflowing with welcome and glee, these austere gentlemen, each clasping one of my hands, exclaimed in unison, "You have done the land of your birth a great good. You have assisted in its redemption."

But I shook my head and replied, "Not I, but another. He shall henceforth be called the 'Unknown Benefactor.'"

Regiment after regiment throughout the many divisions of the army was apportioned its respective allowance from the funds. Harmony and satisfaction were restored. The fires of liberty were rekindled and shone to a brightness not before realized, as the achievements the next few months bear testimony.

Notwithstanding the pledge of secrecy from one to another, it was soon well known that a large private contribution had been received from someone and that one was called, as I had named him, the "Unknown Benefactor."

CHAPTER XXIV

BACK IN NEW YORK

TALKS WITH RIVINGTON

Disappointment, so often my lot, had calloused me against its sting, and I murmured not when told that I was expected to again take up my position as Rivington's assistant. I had hoped otherwise, but why shirk my duty, a duty hard upon me, but that added greatly to the cause in which I served?

Reëntering the city by the channel before described, I passed the first day in the office, posting myself on the happenings within the city during my absence. In this matter I was greatly assisted by perusing the issues of the *Gazette*. I came upon the following notice.

It is understood that an officer, higher in the estimation of the British commander than in grade, wished to marry the woman of his choice. Some say that he had neglected to make sure of the adored one's sincere interest in him, thinking the mother's sanction sufficient. A few, very few, had been invited to a morning wedding at St. Paul's Chapel. The bride walked to the altar with a firm step, and with demure but set face passed through the first part of the ceremony, but when the clergyman asked the vital question, binding the couple for life, the bride-to-be swooned dead away, and was carried from the church, and it is understood that subsequent efforts on the part of the would-be groom to later bring about the desired union have been fruitless.

The same gossips whisper that the lady did not really faint, but feigned this swooning process as she suddenly changed her mind about marrying the man in question.

That evening after I had related to Mr. Rivington of my trip from which I had just returned, and of Paul Manning's benevolence, not mentioning Paul's name nor the manner in which I supposed he acquired the funds, I asked him to whom the above item referred.

He said he had not known of the incident until receiving by post the inserted item, its author's name being withheld; but thinking it proper or mayhap a joke, he had printed it. Surprised was he the next day when at Fraunce's Tavern they said that the facts were true, and intimated that Lieutenant Hastings was the gentleman alluded to. I asked not the lady's name, for to me it seemed sacrilegious to bring Jeanne's name into such gossip to be discussed at drinking carousals. Rivington assured me that he had taken means to substantiate the report and had found it true.

Said he, "I nearly fell into disrepute over the matter, for two days after its publication Sir Henry sent for me and said that one of his estimable officers objected to the notice the item had called toward a certain lady's name, and asked me why I had allowed its publication in the *Gazette*, further admonishing that in the future matters pertaining to the private affairs of himself or his officers should be submitted to him before insertion. I tried to establish an avenue of escape by telling him I had received the matter by post, unsigned, and had not verified it or learned to whom it

applied before publication, for which I was sorry. He insisted that I make a statement to this effect in the next issue, which I did, disclaiming authorship, describing the manner in which the item came to me, ending by expressing the hope that none involved had taken offense at its publication.

"VanHorn, I thought then and think now that the one man who unknowingly interfered with that wedding was you, sir, you. You have been reticent as to your interests in the young lady referred to, and have but admitted your former acquaintanceship, but I am right, I think, in my surmise."

"Not I," I said, alarmed at his presumption, yet feeling a great dawn of hope break over me. "Not I? Why do you think thus?"

"Well, you nearly admitted your feelings toward this young lady, and that they were in a degree reciprocated seems probable; else would you be here, undergoing the dangers that you are? Besides, there are matters on your mind, for often I see you at work totally unconscious of what you are doing, or else you sit and stare into space. Would you still hope on, knowing it useless? You do not then in your own mind consider the young lady lost to you? Did not something interfere with the course of true love?"

"Her mother," I stammered.

"I knew it by the mother's anxiety to have Hastings in her daughter's society, making it appear as though the mother feared contact with others. Even is she cold and almost uncivil to Major André, who had paid

the daughter some attention. Brace up, VanHorn, and be not downcast, for who knows what may yet be in store for you?"

"Are you sure," said I, thinking there might have been a mistake made in their identity, "that Lieutenant Hastings is the one referred to in this gossip? Why to-day in a later copy of the *Gazette*, I noticed that Lieutenant Hastings and Miss Jeanne Mortier were in attendance at the last officers' ball at the John Street Play House."

"Yes, but their appearing together is for effect or mayhap to appease the mother. I attended this ball you referred to and noted these two closely. Believe me, Miss Mortier now only tolerates Hastings. She will repeat these tactics at the theatricals and banquet next week."

"Do you think that she would practice this deceit and plan to yet foil her mother?"

"Yes, why not? She should have her choice in matters of her own. She is no child."

"Then I hope again, for, as you say, she has grown into a woman now, and I hope her mind cannot be easily swayed," as I recalled her womanly appearance when I saw her entering the John Street Play House some two months before.

"What of the affair next week?" I continued.

"A grand affair," said he. Rivington was fond of appearing in Shakespeare's rôles, I learned later, which accounted for his enthusiasm in announcing the affair to be "grand." He continued, "Given by the officers

and ladies with a few others invited, a portrayal of Shakespearean scenes in which some are to appear,—Major John André and Miss Mortier will recite the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet, also the dialogue between Antony and Cleopatra when both declare their love. Others, including myself, will appear. I as Othello will murder a Desdemona, whom I have as yet not met." (It was well known to all that Mr. Rivington was at home in Shakespearean characters, so the reader will not marvel when I say he knew not who was to assist him.)

Was Jeanne equal to such heroics? thought I, and yet I felt honored to know that she, the one with whom in the days gone by I had read these wondrous exemplifications, was to participate with those of distinction. An overwhelming desire to see her on this coming occasion seized me, and I so explained myself then.

"It would be hazardous," said Rivington. "How could you arrange it?"

"By going late and taking seating at the back," I returned. "Why not? I would not be detected."

"Well perhaps not. In such a crowd as will be present, none will be scrutinized closely."

"And about the banquet following the theatricals?" I inquired.

"To be given in honor of Major John André."

"Why him?"

"I don't know. Extremely reticent have been those who have the matter in charge as to this. He has done

nothing especially noticeable. To be sure, he was captured by Montgomery at Quebec and held in prison for a year, but that was long ago and has been forgotten."

"Mayhap he is to do something worthy," I suggested.

"Perhaps."

"Can it not be arranged for me to see this banquet also? as I would so much enjoy witnessing a scene of the enemy's festivities."

He was grave for a moment. "You want to see much," he said. "Here you would run many more chances of detection than at the former place you mentioned. There is only one way whereby you could come, and that is in a serving capacity, and yet you would not then dare to come near the tables for fear of running amuck of Hastings, and if not in this capacity, how could you serve?"

"I do not know," said I thoughtfully, "but you will know of the arrangements, and perhaps you can devise a scheme by which I may attend."

"You risk much," said he, "in attempting this; many will feel the effects of the wine to the extent of blotting out their remembrance, but Hastings drinks moderately and cannot be relied upon to pass you by, should he come in contact with you; but I will see and if practicable you shall witness this banquet. Yes," he finished, laughingly, "you shall see your Lady Jeanne consorting with the representative British and Manhattanites."

The following evening Mr. Rivington mentioned to me that that afternoon he had, while at the daily meeting place of the élite, the hostelry before spoken of, let drop a word to a very young officer there to the effect that a large private contribution had been received by the financiers of the rebels.

"How heard you this?" asked the young and unsuspecting army satellite.

"Two gentlemen thus conversed as I passed them on the street. Tories I think they were," adroitly explained Rivington.

This tale, though thus started, rapidly spread, and the next day the city was rife with it and the following edition of the *Gazette* mentioned it thus:

Dame Rumor, always busy, has lastly furnished us with a tale that, if true, materially affects the cause of those of the Colonies who are at odds against his Majesty.

'Tis to the effect that some unknown benefactor has substantially contributed to the rebel cause, some say twenty, others place the amount as high as fifty, thousand pounds. But this latter amount seems incredulous, for who among the "ruffian band" ever possessed that amount?

On account of the persistency with which this story is told, it may be that some credence may be put upon it. But even if the larger amount has been given, how long will it take the dragoons of "His Smallness Lafayette" to run it down their throats if they are furnished with the wine and entertainment promised them, should they unite their efforts with those of the rebels?

The next week I lived in a haven of delight, or was it a fools' paradise? believing that Jeanne through her affection for me had affected faintness and prevented her marriage with Gilbert. I could hardly await the

time when I would again see her, and when, the day before the event, Rivington told me he had inquired into the arrangements and he thought I could by discreet management see both the miniature plays and banquet, I never for the moment considered the great risk I ran, but rather I rejoiced.

CHAPTER XXV

MINIATURE PLAYS AND BANQUET

I had been about the city so little, not caring to expose myself when I felt I might meet those who knew me; knowing the names of so few streets and places that I was obliged to again inquire of Mr. Rivington the direction and location whence was situated that place, the Mecca of my thoughts—the John Street Play House.

Then at the time of day, between light and darkness—candle light—of the day and evening appointed for the proceedings that interested me I dare say more than any other, I, having hard work to hold myself back until the crowd was mostly well within, finally walked through the sixty feet or more of covered entrance, showed the receipt for my seating to a powdered and low-bowing lackey that approached me, and following him was seated in the rear of the building, but where I could view the elevated stage rostrum and the concourse of people in front, who whispered, laughed, and seemed pleased.

Musicians in front were making efforts to drown the sound of the people's voices, but only succeeded when the conversation and laughter lulled. Strange sights they were to me—the bobbing, nodding women with bare necks and shoulders, the acompanying gentry

in frills and lace that enveloped the ears and chin, leaning so close that their faces almost touched the marbled flesh of the females, as little sentences were whispered into delicate appearing ears, producing laughter or causing blushes to cover the one face and smiles the other. Portly and gray men in raiment that equaled that of Gilbert when I last saw him were joining in all the convivialities, belittling, as I thought, the dignity that should go with their years.

What would the people of my home country say of such things? I was thinking, as musicians started up a livelier tune, and the filmy curtain in front slowly ascended. On the center of the stage platform I saw, beautifully decorated with flowers and tapestry, a canopy, elevated above the floor, in the midst of which was a figure, bare-armed and draped in gauzy silk and gold.

In this beautiful Juliet I recognized my playmate and fellow-student of the lines she would soon speak—lines which I had been slow in understanding and she apt. Below and to the right, cavalier-clad in scarlet, bootlets and sword, stood her Romeo, Major John André.

A heavy burst of applause greeted this picture, while as for me, I was transplanted into a fairyland, or heaven, I knew not which, and I unconsciously arose, shouted and applauded with the others.

"Adorable, beautiful," I heard on every hand.

"Do you know her?" asked the lady in front of my seat of her escort.

"Who?"

"The Juliet—Miss Mortier."

"No, but *of* her, yes. 'Twas she that swooned at her wedding to Lieutenant Hastings, remember?"

"Oh, yes; so 'tis she, is it? Well, lucky Hastings should he marry her yet."

"He won't after that success of hers. Methinks an André will be no lower than her aim."

"Her beauty merits him or better," was the reply.

Again the applause sounded as Juliet said:

> "Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day;
> It was the nightingale and not the lark,
> That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear."

And so on they did repeat the parting scene of Shakespeare's lovers. And when, in closing, Juliet, as Romeo leaves, said:

> "O fortune, fortune, all men call thee fickle;
> If thou are fickle, what dost thou with him
> That is renown's for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
> For then, I hope, thou will not keep him long
> But send him back."

The curtain settled and all seemed wild in their efforts to pay homage to those who had so splendidly engrossed and amused them. However, concerning André could the events of the following days have been then and there disclosed, the fickleness of fortune would have been apparent, the appeal, "thou will not keep him long" would have seemed in vain.

James Rivington then spake the death chamber words to a Desdemona, who I learned was a Miss Chew, and although in dramatic gestures and enunciation he exceeded any others who that night exhibited their qualities, the applause meted them was insignificant as compared with that given André and Jeanne.

A young officer, the unsophisticated one to whom Rivington had imparted the story of Paul's gift, then recited in a nasal and bold voice the unchaste but ardent story of the love of Venus for Adonis.

The last and crowning event was to be, where in Egypt's palace in Alexandria, the words of love were passed between Antony and Cleopatra, to be given by those who had so splendidly opened the evening scenes.

I doubt not that it was as grand or better than the former, but when the appeal of Antony was made as sacrificing earth and heaven to his love, I was so overcome by jealousy, for I could not see Jeanne embraced even though it was done under the guise of acting, that I failed to appreciate the full beauty of what was before me. As to all that was said or done that night, I have little remembrance, for to me William Shakespeare was always an enigma. Therefore I can hardly be expected to detail the stage proceedings, and else were I prompted now I could not state even what I have quoted from this wonderful tragedy.

While the arrangements for the banquet they were to attend were being made and the people promenaded outside, I hurried forth and walked in an opposite direction from that which the majority of them had

taken, and consuming time enough so that the house might be emptied, I went back and assisted in the arrangements, removing seats, placing tables, spreading cloths, and mingling with the others similarly engaged.

Thought I, meanwhile, of all I had seen this evening. That I, a plain man to whom the teachings of my stepfather had meant so little, could ever be the husband of one so charming, one who had by contact with those who lived in the same atmosphere as this audience added greater culture and refinement to her accomplishments. Rivington was wrong. She did not, could not, love me.

Underneath the stage was a room used as a kitchen, where were prepared the viands when the auditorium was utilized for purposes like that of the present.

Mr. Rivington had on investigation learned the arrangements of this room, that it could be reached by a door a few steps down from the auditorium, at the left of the stage and close to where the tables were to be placed in the space cleared for such purpose. From one corner, the corner nearest the door described, a curtain was placed, behind which were shielded many bottles of wine. From here when opened, the wine was to be served to the guests. He had offered my services to assist here, had given an assumed name and said that I could be trusted.

As soon as the preparations were completed, the merry crowd returned, some one hundred in all, invited previously from among the dignitaries of the army, their friends and ladies. Help was plenty, and I now

stationed myself near the door on the stairway. As the door opened when the gillies passed in and out, I observed those who came. When all were seated, I hurriedly entered my own booth or place and waited until I was called upon to do the work for which I was there. Only two dim candles lighted my place of work and concealment, making it secure, even though the motley banqueters should in passing have deigned to look searchingly in upon " lackeys " such as I.

The tables were so situated that through a narrow aperture of the curtain I could, by carefully moving about, see nearly all present. At the extreme end of the table farthest from me was seated a figure that by his epaulets and dignity of bearing I knew to be Sir Henry Clinton. At his right, I recognized the man of my nightmare, who had caused me many pangs of conscience, John André. A little removed from them, toward and facing me, sat the man by whose grace I was present, my partner in secrecy, James Rivington, while a little below him, also facing me, was Gilbert Hastings with Jeanne and her mother. I trembled as I saw them.

I could distinctly hear the compliments of those around her expressed, as they nodded from across the table. Why this hypocrisy, I thought—Jeanne not wanting to marry Gilbert, and yet always in his society. Why, but ah, the ways of women, unfathomable and as dense to me then as now.

Now the gillies were serving the viands, now the hungry and those who ate to be like the others, they

whose appetites were no longer evidences of healthful bodies, were partaking of the feast, and the voices were hushed as they were taken up with the matter at hand—the delicacies provided.

From the conversation that floated toward me, I made out that some one of them was to be signally honored, for I heard repeated this, "Chance for promotion." "Lucky man." "The king will notice this in no small way." I wondered who and what was referred to.

Finally the door of the kitchen opened, and the one or two who were to assist me entered my place, as one of them said, "Now for the wine."

For the next hour I was so busy that I noticed not what was going on outside, save that from the amount of wine drunk, I judged they too were engaged. Noisy they became, and the demand for wine, diminishing somewhat, gave me a chance to look about. I saw strange scenes, for such as they to figure in, callow youth intoxicated, thick-tongued matrons, with male arms about them, some loudly talking and gesticulating, women's faces flushed, bawdy stories being told or more ribald songs being sung, all excited and hilarious.

I looked toward Jeanne. It must be her first banquet, thought I, as the disgust and anger showed itself in her knitted brow and flashing eyes. "Leave," I felt like calling out to her. Gilbert nervously glanced toward her, as if in doubt how she would take this scene before her, while her mother wore a matter-of-fact look as if these places and experiences were com-

mon, or were what was to be expected of those so "exalted."

All my disgust crystallized toward this mother who, by her looks of contentment, showed her foolishness and vanity.

"Well," thought I, as I looked upon her, by way of resentment, "you did not force the wedding you desired, did you?"

Toasts soon followed. Sir Henry arose, and in a voice that expressed little feeling in the matter proposed the health of "His Imperial Majesty, King George of Great Britain." A salient applause followed. Clinton seated himself in a manner that denoted that he realized his duty was done. (In this description of Clinton's manner, I may make him appear less enthusiastic than he did, by reason of my prejudice, but think not.)

Then arose Major André, who, by his rank, was commissioned next to speak. He brilliantly expressed himself as he well wished the "health, happiness, and success of our illustrious commander, Sir Henry Clinton." Another whom I did not know, had trouble by reason of wine consumed, in standing steady, wished that similar good things attend this "peerless leader in the South, Lord Cornwallis."

Each toast was drunk to, deeply, and by many several times over, as they loudly called out again and again to drink the health of this or that one who had been mentioned. Judgment, modesty, and brain seemed lost. Revel and excitement superseded.

"They are mad," thought I, as an officer, who I learned from one of my attendants was Captain Cathcart, stood up, and delivered the following: "Ladies and gentlemen present; to me a very pleasant task has fallen, pleasant and yet not so, for I fear I cannot do justice to him I am to mention. To him, who in literature and poetry has succeeded; to him, to whom art is simple and war and noble deeds are as but passing events, do I offer this toast. One who, by a year as the rebels' prisoner knows the hardships of warfare, whose tongue and pen are ever ready to bolster and uphold His Majesty, who has not been spoiled by the much pettings of his followers. Under all the vicissitudes to which he has been subjected, has borne himself an heroic figure and unspotted. I might tell of his prowess, his gallantry, and successes at great length, and yet not tire you; but I will not mention farther than to say that to all whom success has attended there comes a time when a capsheaf is added, a final condition or achievement beside which all other things accomplished fade and pale. To him, whom I will name, this time has come, and the near future holds for him much, and a crowning glory. It is as though the goal was reached and the prize already won, and I now place the laurel wreath upon the brow of Major John André and inform you and him that a knighthood will be his, following the crushing blow he will in the near future deliver to the enemy."

The speaker was seated amidst a howl of drunken delirium, mingled with little feminine screams. Men

and women alike had arisen. I saw men with one arm about a woman's neck, while in their free hand was held aloft the red glass, whose contents was now responsible for their acts, the women likewise embracing their escorts, all shouting the name of "André, André."

The deafening noise and disgusting scene lasted for some few minutes, long enough for me to observe the effect at least on Jeanne. Angered by the wanton, unlicensed drunkenness on every side, her face as flamed by passion as were the others by wine, she, as the applause died away, sprang up and into her chair, and raised her hand defiantly. "We hear much these days about valiantness and bravery and but little of sacrifice and suffering," she said. "To one of whom we have heard much about recently, who even though he sympathizes with the others, yet all must admire his sacrifice. Who here then will be so ungallant as to refuse my request? All drink, then, to the Unknown Benefactor."

I doubt if they knew what they were doing. I doubt if they heard or, hearing, realized what she had said. The spectacle of a woman, excited, standing in her chair, toasting someone was sufficient, for with few exceptions they arose, some holding to the table for support and cheering the one that Jeanne, not knowing his name, in her anger had mentioned.

Sir Henry and John André looked toward each other, smiled and nodded. Did they think that she too was drunk? She had not tasted the wine since I had observed her, or did they think it a foolish woman's

whim? More likely the latter was my conclusion, and in this I was right.

Mr. Rivington looked toward my corner, and in the excitement as if I thought he summoned me, I passed without and toward him. He had arisen and was cheering with the others, so the wild movements of his hand as he beckoned me back were unnoticed, save by Jeanne, who following his eye as she waited for the applause to die away before being seated, looked upon me and paled. I saw this plainly and felt that in spite of my beard, and powdered hair, she recognized me. Back I slunk into my place and going thence to the kitchen, passed outside by a back way, and to the street.

CHAPTER XXVI

ARRESTED

As I said before, I knew but little of streets or places, and in going out I took what I supposed was the direction I had come by, the street leading from John toward Hanover Square. After walking for some time, meanwhile thinking over the event of the evening, consoling myself with the proof that Jeanne's actions had proven her dislike for those around her, and that she hoped for the success of Washington's armies.

I had walked on for some time, not thinking but that I was on my homeward course, when at last I looked about me, and knew that by this time I was more than due at Rivington's place. The sight of unfamiliar buildings, not such as were in our vicinity, made me aware that I was on the wrong street and perhaps lost. I retraced my steps for some little way, and saw nothing familiar by which I could get bearings as to where I was.

On coming over this street I had twice passed the armed guard that patrolled the city by night and by the light of the stars above saw that each scrutinized me closely. Now on going back, the tread of a single man broke the stillness of the night. Realizing that

at this late hour, should the same guard see me and recognize me as one he had before met that evening, it might please him to inquire my home or name, and why I thus paced the streets. Not caring to become entangled with the military law of the city, I looked about for a place to secrete myself. Bordering on the walk close by where I now was, there was located a small lawn, in the center of which was a brick cottage. Through the glass surrounding the door of this cottage, a pale light emitted enough brilliancy to give me sight of the gravel walk leading from the doorway down to where I stood. Close by the house and just to the left of the gravel stood a tree, and to avoid the noise my footsetps might make crunching on the gravel, I stepped on the grass at its edge and boldly walked to this tree, feeling that I was now secure from the gaze of the approaching guardsman, who now was close. A minute and he passed, but as his retreating footsteps sounded more faint and muffled, another and a louder noise came to me—the roll of a fast-approaching carriage.

"I would stay where I was," thought I, until this too had passed. It came up and stopped opposite the walk to this house. "What should I do?" To move would have been to expose myself, so I decided to stay where I was, believing if the occupants of the carriage should enter the house, necessitating their passing in close proximity to me, I would carefully move around and keep the tree between us, the trick of squirrels when evading the hunter.

The occupants of the carriage alighted. Three I could see by the dim light afforded. They approached the house, coming close by me. I recognized their voices. It was Jeanne, the Madame, and Gilbert. This place then that I had forcedly trespassed was the home of the Madame.

"One would think," I heard her say to Jeanne, "that you were a rebel, and certainly you were unwomanly in your assumption to speak as you did."

Jeanne made no reply. Gilbert too was quiet. I noticed that he was walking between the two, supporting one on either arm.

Coming closer to the approach, the Madame walked up the steps of the portico, and opening the door entered and closed it, as if she believed the man to whom she wished to marry her daughter might be able, without her presence, to utter more affectionate words in his waning courtship.

"Why did you do this rash thing?" asked Gilbert, "Not that I by word would chastise you, but if I should uphold you to the commander of this city, as might be expected of me, I would in so doing lose his favor."

"Don't uphold me then," came the not uncertain reply.

"I would like always to uphold you," he said. "Why put me off?"

"Hush; you promised that this matter should not come up again for one year. You just asked me why I acted so rashly. I will tell you. You heard to-night

of the effort of Major André to cover himself with a larger glory. Well, I feel that in the small plays to-night, judging by the applause, I was a success. My toast to the one who sacrificed treasure to the Colonial cause was to me my crowning act, for I too am at heart a rebel and sympathize with their cause." She laughed a merry, taunting laugh. Too dumfounded to reply, probably, Gilbert kept silence. She became graver again as she inquired, "What is Major André to do?"

He did not reply.

"Why not tell me?"

"Why should I, you who sympathize with the enemy. Yet knowing it, you could do no harm, and as you desire it, to please you, I will tell you."

He leaned toward her and talked so low I could not hear, save her murmured "Ohs."

Anxious to transmit to Washington this secret he was telling her, eager to assist in a way that appeared large, so anxious that I craned my head forward and half took a step toward them, thus exposing one-half of my body. Something under my foot snapped. At this, they both turned and looked in my direction, and before I had drawn back again behind the tree, they saw my outlined figure. Jeanne faintly screamed while Gilbert drew his sword and darted toward me.

"Surrender," he called out. "Who are you?"

I answered not.

"Well, it don't matter who you are, but where you will be an hour hence, I well know."

Then as the guard was returning, he called to him for assistance. I might have resisted, but to what use? One guardsman was near by and others only a little farther away. I could with my pistol have shot Gilbert and escaped, but this did not occur to me, nor would I have done this anyway. I hoped that he would only take a passing interest in and not recognize me.

"Your wrists, man," said the guard as he produced his hand shackles. I held up my hands to be secured, and for the first time was in the power of one who wished my life, but as yet had not recognized me.

"Take my carriage," said Gilbert to the guard. "I will go with you," as he offered his hand in good-by to Jeanne. She took it and then calmly opened the door, so I at once imagined that the light might shine on me and perhaps show her who it was. Did she think then it was I?

Boldly I stepped half a pace sideways, so that the light momentarily rested in my face. A knowing look and an alarmed expression rested on her countenance as she again said "Good-night," and closed the door behind her.

She has again recognized me, thought I, but to what purpose will be her recognition, for I thought she could do nothing to extricate me from a situation into which I had blundered.

"Mount, sir," was commanded me a minute later, as we had left the house and approached the carriage. I did so. The guard mounted and sat beside me, with Gilbert opposite and facing me.

"To the Provost," was called out to the driver.

Heavens! the Provost, that place presided over by the diabolical Cunningham, the British jailer, with more vengeance on its inmates than Lucifer meted out to those in Hades. Now the truth of my condition broke over me. I would be recognized and executed. When? I had but a few hours yet to live, being sure that if Gilbert recognized me I would be executed on the morrow.

We were but a few minutes' ride from the Provost. It seemed short to me, for I inwardly felt that it was my last ride, perhaps, and that I should not again enjoy the free air of Heaven until I might be led out to face the gibbet. I was possessed with a new and stronger desire to live than I had known or acknowledged in some time. To be hanged, even as a spy on the felon's gibbet, once would not have been entirely unwelcome.

Coming to the Provost, we halted and alighted. Gilbert rattled loudly on the iron door for some minutes until finally it opened and disclosed a half-dressed figure that from his muscular physique, his awful piercing eyes, and coarse black beard I recognized as tallying with the description I had heard of the keeper, Cunningham.

"What is it?" he asked in a voice harsh and coarse.

"More boarders," laughed Gilbert.

"Felon or rebel?"

"A felon, I guess," answered Gilbert; "a prowler who explains nothing as to himself."

Here Cunningham thrust his lanthorn into my face. Gilbert drew back in amazement.

"Henry!" he said, "you, you?"

Did I mistake his tone? for I thought it one not of vengeance but of softness and brotherly love, but his next word drove my false fancies away.

"A rebel," he nodded toward Cunningham.

"To the dungeons below!" called out the latter, to an inside guard he had summoned.

"I once knew that man," I heard Gilbert remark as I was being led away. "He is a rebel and a dangerous one. In the morning I will report the case to Sir Henry."

Here I turned back and looked upon him. Not daunted in what he had to say, he poked the heartless Cunningham in the ribs as he finished, "Then you will get another job with £5 in it," as he motioned the shape of the noose and to his neck.

CHAPTER XXVII

MATTERS I KNEW NOT OF

OTHER things concerning me took place that night, but of them then, for a certainty, I knew not. Had I been my only protector, had there been no intervention from another I should not have been here now, telling this tale. As to how the chapter that I now relate was made known to me, it shall be hereinafter revealed.

As Jeanne for the second time that evening recognized me, she, after closing the door, did what most women do when tried in spirit, cried. Then she resolved what to do. Passing above, stopping at the mother's door to bid her good-night, she closed the door of her own room loud enough for the mother to hear it, with herself on the outside. Quietly tripping down the stairs, she opened the outer door carefully and stepped outside.

My, how dark it was. She had not noticed that before, but the darkness made no difference with her resolution. Taking the key with her, she passed down the walk to the street, where, turning toward Broadway, she swiftly went forward, dodging in this alley or behind that tree to avoid some belated footman or the guard, jumping at the stirring of leaves, at the distant baying of a dog, her heart sinking lower all the time,

only her resolution keeping her up. At last she reached the house known as No. 1 Broadway, wherein lived Clinton, Major André, Gilbert, and other officers of the suite. The ponderous door was slow in opening, she thought, after her loud and excited knock. The colored footman roused himself and yet rubbed his gummy and bedimmed eyes, as he beheld a woman outside, pale, nervous, and in party attire.

"Is Major André in?" she asked.

"Yessum, but abed."

"The matter is urgent, go to him and say that Miss Mortier awaits him on important matters."

"Yessum," again was the answer as the footman turned about and retreated, realizing as he did so that he was liable to a scolding for breaking in on the sleeper. But the sight of a woman, disheveled, her face showing great earnestness of intent, told him that her declaration of the urgentness of the matter was truthfully stated.

André, when he heard the name of his visitor, was but a moment in dressing and appearing.

"Surely," said he, "propitious affairs are responsible for this call; believe me, knowing that the circumstances are extreme, I will do what I can for you, be it consistent," said he as he appeared.

A short interval followed, in which Jeanne gathered her energies.

"Would you," she said, after a moment, "would you return a great favor, a favor that at the time you thought a stupendous blunder from one whom you sup-

posed an unsophisticated yokel, but really one who by my intervention, on the Philadelphia road that day, allowed you and others to return peacefully from whence they came? You remember the circumstances, do you not?

"Yes."

"Then knowing that by my persuasion this one let us escape from a predicament that at least would have meant long imprisonment, if not death, for could you have proven that you were not spies? Dressed as a citizen and inside the enemies' lines, would not this have been difficult to have disproven? Now would you recompense that favor by one similar? Answer, I pray you, affirmatively, and do not delay."

"It was gross violation of duty on his part, and for me to do as you ask would be another, only the violation entailed, coming from myself, whom you know am higher than a private, would not mitigate the offense."

"Yes, true, but again I ask you, remember the other circumstance. Remember what he did for you. Plain man though he is, honor is held in as high regard by him as by any. You will do this, won't you?"

Her pleadings were so womanly, supplemented by her earnestness, that he, man that he was with a large heart, thought best to inquire regarding him who was the object of these pleadings.

"But you have not as yet told me of this man or of the circumstances. Where is he now?"

"In prison in this city. Probably the Provost."

"Oh, a spy. How know you this, and tell me the young man's name."

She gave my name, and recited how and by whom I had been arrested.

"In your mother's dooryard, did you say? Why was he watching your house?"

She dropped her eyes and hesitated before replying, "I do not know."

Her hesitancy saved me, for André followed up her answer with an "Oh, I see, an old suitor of yours who probably knew of your absence and awaited your return, anxious to again behold you. Well, believe me," as he nodded toward her, "I do not blame him. Speak, was this his mission?"

"You just said that you blamed him not for so doing," she answered, seeing the opportunity of avoiding his direct question.

"If this were his reason and he were not here in the act of spying upon the doings of his Majesty's troops, it alters largely the situation, and perhaps I may be able to assist you, but thought I him a spy, I should be obliged to act otherwise. If I do this, I will have to intercede with the commander here, and in my intercession say that a friend of mine was unjustly accused and parry for his release. This party being a friend of yours makes him a friend of mine, thereby avoiding a falsehood."

"You are kind, sir," said Jeanne, her eyes welling, her voice fraught with emotion, "and this after my almost insult to your people at the banquet. By way

of apology, I wish to state that I was angry at what I saw about me. It was anger that spoke and not a desire to detract from the nice things said about you. I just did——"

"Oh, I know the rest. You suddenly thought of a rebel sweetheart and paid his cause a tribute. Anyway, so few were in condition to digest what you said that it will not be thought of again. I will go above and see Sir Henry at once."

He was not gone long, and, returning, bore in his hand a scrap of paper, which he held toward her. She grasped this, and holding it aloft, read, as a great weight was lifted from her heart, the order for my release, bearing the signature of him in whom only that power was vested.

At that moment the outer door was opened in response to a knock, and Gilbert Hastings, returning from the Provost, stepped inside. A look of amazement overspread his countenance, while Jeanne appeared ill at ease. Turning toward her with a voice as commandatory as he dared make it under the circumstances, the presence of André and his former experiences with Jeanne forbidding more than fervent tones, he asked of Jeanne.

"How came you here?"

"I walked."

"And alone?"

"Alone."

His face elongated as he speculated on the purport of her presence here.

"For what purpose?" he asked.

Here André took a hand in the conversation.

"You may as well understand, Lieutenant, that the man you, through revenge, arrested to-night is to be released—the man who saved your neck and mine from harrowing difficulties, that you would repay by his death, is to go free."

Gilbert again glanced at Jeanne, and read that she had recognized me and had come to plead for my release. Defiantly he turned upon André and asked:

"Not by your order?"

"No, but by the order of one whose word is the law here, Sir Henry Clinton. I hold here his signature to such release," as he took from Jeanne the paper and held it so that Gilbert might read.

"'Tis preposterous," said Gilbert. "One would think from your statement that you were the law here and him you mentioned but an instrument in your hands. Knew he the character of the man released when he signed that paper—a spy? I will go above, and make him acquainted with the facts."

"Hold," interrupted André. "I admit that this man's identity and purpose was not mentioned when I secured this signature, just as you kept that man's real character from him when you secured his signature to a reward for the death of one Henry VanHorn, an unheard of thing in civilized warfare, yet you accentuated the circumstances by claiming VanHorn to be a merciless outlaw. Oh, you wince."

Then turning to Jeanne, he begged her pardon for

his language, "But my statements as to the reward are correct," he said.

"Oh, Gilbert," Jeanne spoke, "how could you, and he the same as your brother?"

"Brother?" asked André, "you arrest one who bears the relationship to you of brother?"

Gilbert with blanched but yet determined face moved toward the stairway leading upward from the reception hall in which they were, when André raised his hand and spoke:

"Not so, my man, for if you reveal to the commander above that the man whose release I secured is of the enemy, I shall have your doings in the Commissary looked into and the reason for your opulence shall be revealed."

Gilbert hesitated, but in a moment said:

"You, sir, by lending your influence as you have, are not better than a traitor."

"And you are a thief, living on the fruits of your spoil, and I can prove it. An ingrate, too," André added, "who would imprison a brother who is here bent on doing no harm, and who assisted both you and I from intricate difficulties."

Gilbert, seeing that his revenge on me was to miscarry, assumed an attitude of repentance.

"Jeanne," he said, as he threw himself at her feet, "it was for love of you that I did these things. I did not recognize him until in the light of a lanthorn at the Provost, so I am not altogether to blame for this. Then I thought that he alone stood between us. Blame

me not for loving you to the point of sacrificing my parent love or the filial esteem with which I held Henry."

She had since his entrance worn a cringing look and demeanor, as she listened to the quarrelings of these two men, the accusations from one that were undenied by the other. Now she turned upon the culprit, "And you would sacrifice a life for me, while I do not nor never cared for you? For my mother's sake, I have borne much and tried to regard you favorably. Since that scene in the church, I have only tolerated you."

"Why call it a scene? Were you not sincere? Did you not in fact faint?"

"Yes, I f-e-i-n-t-e-d."

"And because you loved the Dutchman you have made me appear ridiculous."

"No, I was not as bad as that. I expected to close my eyes to my own feelings, to close out all hope of happiness and marry you. I care not if other ears than yours listen to what I am to say. That day in the church, smothering my own feelings, as I just said, so that inwardly they made me mad, I saw as I approached the altar, closing my eyes as I paced forward, a face, whose you may guess. A hurried resolution came to me, that of swooning and preventing our marriage; happily it saved me from you, for now by your own confession and the accusation I have listened to, your real character has been laid bare."

Like one stunned, he had stood and listened to all

"'Come not near me nor speak,' she commanded."

she said. Knowing that all was nearly lost, he stepped toward her, and opened his lips as if to make a final appeal.

"Come not near me nor speak," she commanded.

"Go," said the stern voice of André.

Gilbert turned about and slowly ascended the stairs to his room above as Andre ordered a coach, saying to Jeanne, "I will accompany you home."

The coach ready, he placed Jeanne inside and as he himself climbed in its aperture called out to the coachman, "To the Provost."

CHAPTER XXVIII

RELEASED

As I heard the taunts from Gilbert regarding the probable disposition of myself in the morning, hope left me, and for the first time, I believed I was to die. To be sure, I had at one time sought for and wished that this condition come upon me; but recently my feelings had undergone a change, the events of the last day had inspired me with a new life and ambition. Not that I considered Jeanne's recent course or actions as being a surety of her love for me. Far from it; but my inner self was pregnant with renewed desires that lent hope.

As the guard piloted me down the corridor leading past the "iron-room," in which Cunningham for safety harbored himself, we turned quickly to the right on reaching the corridors, and to where the guard opened a door that was at the top of a flight of stairs. Down below, there shone one dim candle by which the guards were to be lighted as they traversed the lower corridor. I knew at once that this place was the dungeon cellar about which I had heard, the place wherein was incarcerated those on whom tortures were inflicted by the irate keeper.

As we descended, the foul air from below, as if over-

charged with its own foul damp and rottenness, rushed past, the stench nearly sweeping me over, so powerful was its pungence. This cellar, soon after the occupation of the city by the British, was reconstructed to its present semblance, its spaciousness permitting the construction of two rows of cells opening off each side of a dark corridor.

These cells, not more than six by ten feet in proportion, were of stone, with an iron door, and were only lighted by one little window opening to the outside at the extreme top, so small that not enough sunshine or air could penetrate to dispel the awful gloom and stifling atmosphere therein contained. To the center of the corridor and at the left my conductor stopped, and after opening the door, bade me enter, which I did. Click, went the door behind me and I was fast inside the Provost jail in a cell whose interior I knew not of, nor cared to explore and find out.

Hope completely deserted me. I sank down and on to a pile of rags that served as a bed. Rags cold and damp, that from their feeling on my fingers' ends I knew to be but the grewsome leavings of former prisoners who had in turn contributed some articles of clothing, so that he who followed might be better provided in the matter of a bed. Despair so settled over me that before I had been here confined many minutes, I was convinced that death would be preferable to many days and nights here.

How long would I be here confined? how many hours before the dawning of day, when, perhaps, I would be

notified to come forth and die? I pictured myself as about to be hanged from some near-by tree. Well, they will find me no weakling to deal with, thought I. I will die as becometh a true soldier. My thoughts reverted to Jeanne. She had recognized me, I knew, and yet, thought I, how powerless she is to lend me succor. Why had I so cared to see her, as to expose myself to the chances of arrest? With only one thought did I content myself, that I had witnessed her triumph and later had heard her expression which signified that she partook of hope in the same principles, on the same side of the great war question as did I.

Then my mind was absorbed with thoughts of my mother and later of Paul Manning. Mother had given up my father to the cruel war of a generation before, and now I would surely suffer a felon's death on the gibbet. That she had never forgotten, that she, although wedded to a man who held her greatest respect, still mourned my father's untimely demise, I knew, and now she would additionally suffer, and keenly at that, I believed, for the rest of her days, knowing that I, unheedful of her advice, had walked headlong into the hands of those who delivered me to death.

I dismissed the recollection that Paul Manning might, too, mourn for me, for I fancied not the idea of being wept over by one devoid of respect for the law.

Lying back with my elbow cushioned in the rags under me, I recalled the awful stories that had reached me of the horrible tortures this man Cunningham in-

flicted upon his prisoners, for besides the physical punishment the disease-weakened were put to, there were the mental torments to which he stooped, his favorite one being to rush in the cells at unseemly hours of the night and notify the prisoners "that their hour was at hand and to come forth to the gallows," then at their quakings or moans of fear he would laugh in diabolical hoarse tones at their timidity. Would he try this on me? Perhaps, for Gilbert had told him he knew me, and having suggested that I should be hanged later, Cunningham may amuse himself with me in this way. Again I assured myself that no "white feather" would be shown by me at which mine enemies or tormentors could jeer.

A scurrying noise in the opposite corner caused me to jump on my feet and my hair to elevate, my heart to thump loudly. Then there appeared in the darkness several pairs of bright fire-gleaming eyes which notified me that my visitors were rats, who had come out from their slimy holes in the wall to view the intruder. Thought I, "You may frighten me, but Cunningham, should I have my presence of mind, shall not."

Then a long groan came from a cell near me, a groan that vibrated clearly through my own. Horrors, thought I, is that some prisoner here or some moaning soul writhing in torment, as Dante pictured? Again it sounded and continued for some time, while I meanwhile wiped great drops of cold sweat from my brow, my heart sickening within me. No wonder that others confined here went mad, or in sheer desperation

refused to eat the bit of stale and unwholesome food thrown in at the door, starving sooner than endure longer the barbarous treatment, the horrors of these dungeons.

How many, thought I, of my own fellow-soldiers or sympathizers have been confined here, and died? and judging from the evidences of misery and despair that oozed from the floor underneath, that radiated from the walls of my confines, their number must have been legion.

The groaning ceased, ending in a great sob that moved me in compassion for him who thus expressed his distress. Feeling along the floor, I came upon an iron bolt that might have been left or lost in the construction of the cells. I plied it good and hard against the stone partition. A voice answered, but I could not tell from where. Then turning my head, I spied, by a single star that shone through it, what I had not seen before, the one small window of my cell. Again the voice sounded and seemingly through this window. I understood; the window of the cell next mine was near my own. Moving toward it, I found that by grasping its iron bars, I could draw myself up and speak to him who I suppose had done likewise.

"Where are you?" I asked.

"Next to you," returned a voice that, though close by, sounded far away.

We exchanged names and for some minutes told one another of our woes. He was of a Pennsylvania regiment, and among the prisoners captured by the enemy

at Monmouth; had been here for months waiting to be exchanged.

"But why in a dungeon and only a prisoner of war?" I inquired.

"Too crowded above," he said, "and I was made to suffer darkness and solitude as well as starvation."

"Was that you groaning?"

"No, it was a prisoner confined here for the same reason as I, who I fear has gone mad, for added to his groanings he sometimes screeches until others here take up the mad delirium of his cries and all yell simultaneously. Do you know what cell you are in?" he asked. "It's No. 10."

"What of No. 10?"

"I would not care to speak of it unless you insist."

"Tell me," I said.

In a tone full of pity and solicitude, he replied, "No. 10, the cell you occupy, has held unlucky occupants, for the man beyond me says that to be confined in it means death. He and others who have gone have noticed that its occupants are generally led out singly and do not come back. Nathan Hale was confined there, so the rumor that has been handed down through the concourse of prisoners declares."

"I understand," said I, "but I prefer dying to remaining here long."

Just then a step was heard coming down the stairs and along the space between the cells.

"It's Cunningham himself. I know his walk. He is coming to scare and torture someone."

"He may come to lead me forth as you say others have been led from this cell."

"If so, I envy you your chance. Would it were me, if this be the case."

The step came closer and stopped at my door. I let go the window bars and was at the door when the key turned and it opened. A lanthorn flashed in my face. It was Cunningham who spoke.

"Come forth," he said.

"Practice not your torment on me, for I know of your diabolical irony with which you taunt the unfortunate here."

"Come forth," again I heard; "you are to go free."

I hesitated. Was it more of his ironical assurance, meaning to deceive me by false hopes?

"Come," he commanded.

I walked out and preceded him along the corridor, up the stairs, and to the same room where before I had left Gilbert.

"It is too bad to incarcerate a gentleman here, a gentleman with friends of influence."

I yet doubted.

"Speak," I said, "tell me how am I to be disposed of and cease this by-talk."

"Breathe freely. You are released."

I could hardly catch my breath, my knees wabbled in uncertainty.

"How?" I gasped. "By whose orders?"

I thought, did Gilbert secure this release, and were his tauntings of the noose and the price to be paid for my

execution to deceive the keeper? Had his heart turned toward me? Perhaps he was not then instrumental in the reward offered for my death. The answer did much to solve the question.

"I cannot say, but here is a note left by those who called on me, with the order for your release," as he smiled, showing the lines of his fierce mouth and black wolfish teeth.

I tore open the note and eagerly read its contents, written in a feminine hand, a handwriting I had known since childhood. "In Heaven's name, if you value life, secrete yourself until you can leave this city."

Gilbert then was not the person responsible for my release. It was Jeanne.

My jailer opened the outer door and I was but a second in quitting the place wherein I had passed but a few hours; hours of torment and the blackest of my experiences.

CHAPTER XXIX

VISITORS IN THE OFFICE NEXT MORNING

"Is not the *Gazette* issued again to-morrow?" said a voice at the door that I recognized as the voice of Lieutenant Gilbert Hastings. The time was the morning following the night in which I had been arrested and released; the place, in Mr. Rivington's office over the printing establishment.

I had gone direct to the latter place upon being released the night before, or the morning, for daylight was breaking as I reached what I termed home. I had aroused Mr. Rivington and told him of my experience and of the note advising me to quit the city. He had advised me to make no effort to escape, otherwise than by the way I had worked before, telling me that Defoe was expected in the city that day, and for me quietly to wait and go away with this man, deeming it safer this way than to risk any other chance or avenue of egress from the city. We were talking of my good fortune in having a friend to intercede for me, for it was evident that Jeanne had in some way, not known to us, assisted me in escaping the fury of Gilbert's wrath.

"A woman can outwit a man any time," said my companion, "but what will Hastings say, once he finds out what has been done?"

"If possible he will retaliate on me," I said.

"Yes," was the answer, as a footfall sounded on the stairs, "but should the one to whom Miss Mortier appealed be higher in rank than Hastings, methinks he will run against an object more hard to overcome than a woman's dislike."

"You mean André," I said as the footfalls reached the door, and a knock sounded.

The corner in which I sat was not visible from the door, and I well knew that Rivington, who himself answered the call, would not allow anyone to enter whom he feared to have see me, without first giving me the opportunity to escape.

"Good-morning," said the visitor.

Mr. Rivington replied likewise, and then Gilbert asked the question as to the issue of the *Gazette*, the question mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

As to why he should be in doubt as to the exact time of this paper's issue, let me explain that besides our own publication there were four other sheets gotten out within the city and by an arrangement of their separate editors, one came out each day, giving the advantages of a daily journal, and as they alternated in these publications, it was easy for one to forget the particular day on which any paper should be issued—hence Gilbert's question.

"I have here," he continued, "a little matter for publication, matter that I have prepared with a view of dissecting the doings of certain officers here, one in particular whose loyalty can, by overt acts committed, be questioned."

"Matters of a personal nature touching an officer's private matters must first be submitted to the commander," I heard replied, followed by, "you must know of this."

"Oh, well," said Gilbert. "This is more of a joke than serious in its charges," changing his manner to turn the suspicion of Rivington aside. "Print it, and I will stand back of it."

"I will not promise," said the editor, "but will look it over and if proper will publish it."

"Say nothing of my presence here in connection with its authorship," called back Gilbert as he descended the stairs.

Rivington turned toward me, opened the article, and read something that referred to me, inasmuch that it, without calling names, accused an officer of using his influence in securing the release of a spy, who, well known to at least one officer, had by the friendly intercession of "friends" of the accused one, loaned his services, and by so doing, instead of exercising his "humanity for the unfortunate" had made of himself a traitor.

"Hah!" snorted Rivington, as he finished, "so Hastings thinks to anonymously accuse André and draw the latter's anger toward me, does he? This meant for a joke to be printed without official censor. Hah! Great as may be Hastings' influence with Clinton, yet so far more is André's, that if I printed this, I should expect, by André's request and Clinton's command, to swing before the ink on the paper was dry. If Hastings

does not suffer for this, I am mistaken. He would trap me, would he? He would stand back of it, would he? With no name signed, on whom would the blame fall? Does he think me a fool? Then I will pay him in a manner that will change his mind."

Calling an assistant, suiting actions to words, he dashed off a note, and commanded the assistant to repair to Clinton's headquarters and to give it in person to Major John André.

As the distance from Hanover Square to No. 1 Broadway was not far, Mr. Rivington before taking up any further business awaited the return of the messenger with André.

"I may be wrong," said he, "in thinking André the man who assisted in your release, but hardly believe so. In fact I will wager that they quarreled over this matter and that Hastings seeks to use me and the *Gazette* as his tools in retaliation. If I should be wrong, no harm will be done, and if right, will guarantee that Hastings will be so humiliated afterwards that as your rival, he will not be dangerous. André will soon be here and then we shall know."

"Shall I go?" I asked as a step sounded below.

"No; he having seen you only once and smooth-faced then, will not recognize you now; stay and listen."

"Come in," said Mr. Rivington as he opened the door, and the major entered. "Be seated, sir. I pray your pardon," said the most affable of men to the young officer whom he addressed, "for requesting your

presence here. I should call on you, sir; but it is about a matter that can be spoken of here to better advantage than at the headquarters. An officer called here not many minutes ago, and left with me for publication an article that if printed will impeach some officer's integrity, or question his motive for a deed, that from its inflection, I draw to be done through magnanimity."

"Speak," said André. "Tell me to whom you refer."

"Lieutenant Hastings."

His face grew grave. "And the article?"

His face grew even graver as he read and reread. No exclamation of surprise or disgust escaped him.

"It is unfortunate," said he finally, as he handed the note back, "that a promising young officer should loan himself to such petty charges and endeavor to impeach others." The lines of his face relaxing, "I thank you, sir, that you sent for me. You may destroy the note," and he passed out.

"This is a pretty pot of fish for Hastings," gleefully exclaimed Rivington. "VanHorn, mind you he will not live another hour without regretting that he wrote that article. André knows enough about him to make things extremely uncomfortable, and his own safety will demand that he use that knowledge."

CHAPTER XXX

ANOTHER VISITOR. A PLOT REVEALED

The turn matters had taken made me ill at ease, and for the next hour after Andre's exit I was busy making ready for my final quitting of the city. The arrangements, besides conversing with Rivington over the matters of our joint interest, were simple, as I would take with me only the clothes I might wear, those of the farmer appearance. I passed up and down the narrow office, looking out of its windows, or sitting down for a moment, and then resumed the walking again, I am afraid to the annoyance of my fellow-conspirator whom I was to leave.

"Be easy," he said to me. "Defoe will come at noon; he seldom comes earlier, and already you are fretting over his delay." He chuckled. "Hastings before night will be in hotter water than you are. You have passed into the city twice and out once, and are not afraid of undertaking it again, are you?"

"No; why should I be?"

He laughed. "Do you regret leaving the young lady behind? Perhaps she will follow on. Who knows?"

"Would it be dangerous for me to come back after this?"

"Yes, for if André moves against Hastings, the story as to why may come out."

"And of yourself," I asked, "if this be true?"

"None know that you are with me. None then will suspicion me. I will be here when the war is finished, and the last shot fired. This won't be long, I am thinking, for Clinton is hopelessly penned up here by Washington, while Cornwallis, that he may do no harm, is watched over by the forces of the French in the South. How, then, can the war last?"

Our conversation was interrupted by another step on the stairs.

"Defoe," I said aloud, but it was a woman's skirts we next heard swishing over the hallway.

Again Rivington attended the door, while I stepped through another doorway into my own room, leaving the door slightly ajar. A voice on the outside spoke.

"Good-day, sir; may I come in?" It was Jeanne.

I heard a polite invitation given to be seated; heard again the rustle of the skirt, and knew that only a few feet from me was the woman who had secured my release from prison the night before.

"I wish to speak with you, sir," she said, "and alone." I knew she had glanced toward the door that concealed me.

"Speak on," was the answer; "none other is present."

"Do you recall my folly at the banquet last night, when I said and did unbecoming things?"

"I am not to judge of your folly, as you call it. Why do you ask me this?'

"Because, as the drunken applause at my toast was at its height, I saw you waving your hand in a direction in which I looked, and saw one I thought I knew."

"You puzzle me. Are you sure you saw me motioning to someone, as you say?"

"Yes, and to a helper who emerged from the curtain back of which was stored the wine."

"Who, then, did you think it was?"

Promptly she answered, "Henry VanHorn; you know of him; then parley with me no more."

"Yes, I know of him. What would you with him?"

"He is not—not as others here. He *was* a patriot when I last saw him." Here she hesitated, "Can I trust you, sir?"

"Can I trust you?" was the answer, "not you trust me."

"You may, for I shall mention things that farther incriminate me than you would be incriminated, should you admit that you knew the man mentioned was a spy here. Tell me, tell me then, where is he now?"

He hesitated about placing himself in her hands, about revealing that he, too, was in league with me.

She continued, "Can you doubt my patriotism after last evening, when in angry haste I mentioned this Unknown Benefactor of the cause, wherein serves the man I wish to see? But why hesitate? You of all men who have poured vitriol into the scathing sarcasm

with which you have assailed the other side and meant it not; for, if you harbor Henry VanHorn here, are you not, too, as I, a rebel?"

"If I told you that I was, what then?"

"Then I would keep your secret. I see now you and Henry are in league. He is here. Then delay not, for I must see him."

Rivington turned toward the door that opened on me, and said, "Come forth and view the third partner of our secret."

I stepped out. No great exclamation of surprise gave Jeanne, as she saw me. She had expected me to be here, or to here find information of me.

"Henry," she simply said, as we clasped hands, "you are within the city yet!"

"I am to go at once," I replied, not taking my eyes from her face.

"As I saw what took place between you and Mr. Rivington last night, I looked for you here. I have come to play the part of an ingrate, a part that is, save for the excuse of patriotism, an injustice to one who, on my intervention, benefited you last night."

"Tell me of last night."

"No, another time I will tell you the details." She continued, "The cause he represents will suffer more by it than he personally. Do you think then it wrong of me to divulge what I know?"

Both Rivington and I answered in the negative.

"You remember the reference made last night to something that would be done soon, something to be

performed that would silence the rebels. Well, I know what this means."

"You know this! Who told you?" asked Rivington.

"Lieutenant Hastings. I asked him, and he, loath at first to reveal it, finally did so."

"What is it?" two listeners echoed in chorus.

She continued, after a moment of thought, "An important fortress is to be ceded to the British without a struggle on the part of its commander. An attack is to be made, and this commander, feinting defense, is to surrender. This post is so important that once its possession in the hands of the English, the contest would be short-lived after this."

"And I was just remarking that it would soon prove a victory for the Americans," said Rivington; "but, ah, one can never tell what may happen. Who is this commander, and his station that he is to betray?"

We both leaned toward her, anxious to catch the words from her lips.

"I know not," said said, "but this do I know—this false man's wife is the medium through which Major André effected the agreement."

My mind carried me back to that scene on the Philadelphia road when I had first seen John André and of his fellow company that day. I recalled Miss Shippen as being with that party then, and that she had since married the general I had met the day of Herkimer's death.

"Benedict Arnold is the man and West Point the fort," I said.

"Yes," said Jeanne, "it must be, for Gilbert—I mean Lieutenant Hastings—said the command to be surrendered was near by."

"What is to be done?" asked Rivington.

"As I leave to-day, I will ride post-haste northward and if possible stop the conspiracy," I answered.

"Major André will not leave the city until night," said Jeanne, "so you will be in time."

"I think you can soon go," said Rivington, turning his ear toward the door, whence could be heard again the tread of someone climbing the stairs at a ponderous pace. "It must be Defoe"—looking at me to let me know that he was purposely leaving us two alone, as he turned, passed out and closed the door.

The awkwardness and diffidence that had been with me always before, when alone in her presence, I did not feel, for I had as the years advanced enlarged my conception of human nature, and secured command of myself. I realized that perhaps I should speak of what she had done in my favor.

"I have much to thank you for," I said, as I looked toward her.

"Why?" she inquired.

"For securing my release from the Provost."

"What are you saying? I secured your release from the Provost? Why mistrust you that I have such power? Only Sir Henry Clinton could thus release you."

"Why do you evade my inquiry? Surely you were instrumental in this?"

"You honor me," she smiled, "in attributing so great a feat to me."

"Play with me no longer; I am going away, and could I hear your lips confirm what I already mistrust and believe, then this leaving would be free from regrets. Who else could have done it?"

"Mr. Rivington," she replied coquettishly.

"No, you, and you alone. Speak and confirm it."

"What if it were me, would you think it forward of me to so interest myself in—in your welfare?"

"No, if for no other reason than for humanity's sake, you were justified; but I hope that humanity did not alone prompt you."

She looked at the floor and did not reply at once, then raised her hand and said, "I am detaining you when two reasons demand that you accompany the man outside, to without the city; first, your own safety, second, the expediency of the message you will carry." Awkwardly did she abbreviate this as she repeated, "I am detaining you."

"I am glad at least that you acknowledge you are interested in my safe escape," as I looked intently at her.

She blushed prettily.

"Jeanne," I said, "I would like to talk to you of other things, but the man whom I accompany will be impatient if he is farther delayed, but," as I reached out and grasped her hand, "I know not for a certainty

what your feelings toward me are now. Perhaps it was sisterly love that actuated you in my behalf, but I hope it was a love of another stamp, the kind with which we in the past regarded one another. Already seven years have passed since I first gave you evidence of my regard, the term for which Jacob served for Rachel, and now let me state that for another such period will I wait, and longer, too, if you will assure me that through farther waiting I may hope."

In a voice so low that I leaned close to hear her words she replied, "You do not, cannot, know all the circumstances under which I am placed at present; they are so surrounding that I cannot say farther than this, 'You may hope.'"

"When all obstacles are overcome," I started to say——

She interrupted me. "I will come to you."

With another handshake she passed out.

Mr. Rivington immediately entered.

"Is Defoe waiting?" I asked.

"No, he has not arrived. It was another who consulted me on business affairs. Strange, too, it is time he was here."

But he did not come that day or the next, nor until the third one following.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE QUARREL

Again must I drop into a relation of facts that I did not witneess, a relation that may seem to the reader at this stage to be speculation, but really are facts that I became not acquainted with until long after they transpired.

As Jeanne withdrew from our presence, she walked the distance to No. 1 Broadway, there expecting to see and personally thank Major André for his co-operation in securing my release. Reaching this place, she inquired if the object of her visit was in. On being told by the footman that this was the case, she gave her name and seated herself in the reception-room, the same room described in the scene of the night before.

No sooner was she seated than she became conscious of angry voices in a room just back of where she sat. She disliked eavesdropping, but had already sent in her name and to retreat was impracticable, so she stayed and was forced to listen to a quarrel, the voices engaged being the same that she had heard quarreling the night before.

"You," she heard Major André declare to his opponent, "are seeking to belittle me by having published the report of what, in the interest of your brother, transpired last night. He came on here to see, if pos-

sible, an old sweetheart. His presence here augured naught to anyone, save you."

If an observer could have looked in upon the young lady who heard what the others were saying, he would have seen a pretty blush suffuse the cheek and drive away the paleness that her anxiety of the past day and night had brought on.

Lieutenant Hastings replied to the challenge of the other, " In my course all through I have done nothing save what was my duty. No matter what be the subterfuge under which your sympathy has been enlisted, a spy is a spy, and one's duty is to deliver over that one, though he be a brother. I deny, though, that the man is my brother. My father but married his mother."

Scornfully came the answer, " None but an unnatural fiend would do this."

Pretending not to hear this, Gilbert continued, " For this reason did I want these details published, so that the people here may know of what mettle their vaunted hero is made."

I imagine that at this taunt André showed discomfort, for Gilbert followed it at once by saying, " I will appeal to Sir Henry, and after hearing our differences, your story and mine of the part each played in this controversial matter, if knowing all he upholds you, I will resign."

Before André could reply, Jeanne heard another door open and close somewhere in the vicinity of where she sat. A voice, the voice of him to whom Gilbert had

offered to submit the dispute, sounded loud and stern—
"Gentlemen, cease this quarrel. Who speaks of resigning? As if I could lose either of you, my most valued friends. Who was it, I say, and why?"

"It was you, Lieutenant Hastings; speak and answer the question," prodded André.

"Yes, 'twas I who spoke of resigning," said Gilbert, "and this I will do unless Major André may see fit to do so first."

"Hardly," said André dryly.

"But," continued the apoplectic baronet, "this does not answer my question."

Gilbert then told him of the arrest, confinement, and release of myself.

"A man," said he, "whom I know and know to be a spy here."

"Pray how came he to be released then?" asked Sir Henry.

Gilbert answered, "There stands his propitiator."

"It is true," said the soft voice of André, "that I assisted in gaining this man's freedom. It was his release you signed in bed this morning before cock-crow. Remember?"

"Yes."

"On the confession of a young lady who called upon me at this house, that this man, though a patriot, entered the city to see her if possible, and in this attempt was captured and imprisoned by his rival for this lady's hand—Lieutenant Hastings. As the Lieutenant had by deception secured your signature to an

offer for this man's head, I believed then and believe yet that hatred for his brother and rival and nothing else caused him to imprison this man. Thinking then that he was unjustly accused and persecuted and might through Hastings's dislike suffer death on his conviction, I took it upon me to secure by your consent his release in the manner you know. But hear me out. Then this man before you, undertaking to throw censure upon me, did this morning instruct the editor of the *Royal Gazette* to harass me through its columns and accuse me of irregularity in the transaction. No name was to be mentioned, but I was obviously referred to. In time this would have been looked into and finally told and believed that I had done wrong."

The tone of the choleric commander left no doubt as to whom he sided with, had not his words been more assuring.

"What right have you," evidently addressing Gilbert, "to question Major André's actions or authority, much less impeach his loyalty?"

"I question his loyalty because I consider it questionable, else why release a spy?"

"Your brother, you mean," interjected André. "Hastings," continued André, "the Commander seems to uphold me in this matter, and now that I have his ear, actuated only by a desire to do the army justice and not to stand by and see the Crown robbed, I accuse you of irregularities in the Commissary, and have proof to furnish that will substantiate my accusation. I warned you against bothering the baronet with your

quarrel and mine, but now that you have, the worm has turned; your round of gayety and good time at the Crown's expense is at an end. I denounce you as dishonest."

Slowly, as if his ears belied him, did Sir Henry thereupon speak.

"Lieutenant Hastings, I hope you may be able to disprove these charges. Had they come from less than the Major here, I should have dismissed them as frivolous and at once. But from him, it is different, and I know that an investigation is necessary. As you know, Major André is to leave the city for a few days; pending his return, when the investigation will be taken up, you are released from duty, but may have the freedom of the city."

It was the accuser who next spoke. "Sir Henry Clinton," he said, "the friendship and love we bear one another should buoy your confidence in me higher than to believe me taking undue advantage of this unfortunate affair. Lieutenant Hastings has attempted to magnify certain acts of mine into what he terms a league with the enemy; first through a newspaper sheet and then personally to you. Final should this proof be to you that, given the chance, he would thwart the object of my mission northward. Not perhaps through disloyalty as much as dislike for me. Pending then my return, I will feel safer while away on matters that are extremely ticklish, should I know him to be where he can do no harm, where at all times I can know where he is. Again I assure you that no malice enters into

my request, but rather a desire to better carry out our plans and better serve the king."

From the time Sir Henry took before replying, Jeanne knew that his meditations proved that he disliked the proposition. Who would win out, André or Gilbert?

"It shall be as you ask," eventually answered Clinton, his voice responsive to André's supplication and it seemed steeled against the unfortunate Gilbert.

No word did the accused one reply, as he realized perhaps that it was all over with him and with his prospects. Jeanne heard the guard called, assemble, and finally raised her eyes as the door opposite her opened. Chains clanked as the guards led their prisoner toward her. His glance fell upon Jeanne.

"You here to witness my downfall, are you? Well then rejoice, for it is complete."

"Nay," answered Jeanne as she saw the full meaning of the latest turn of affairs. "I do not rejoice; my sympathy goes out to you, and in your misfortune instead I pity," as the tears flowed down her cheeks.

"Then reserve that pity," was the proud, defiant reply. "It was you and your conniving that brought me here, you and the Dutchman."

The guards with their prisoner had crossed the room and were near the outer door. Sir Henry and André appeared in the opposite doorway, through which the other had just come, when the head guardsman called out to the commander, "To the Provost, I suppose?"

"To the Provost," was replied.

CHAPTER XXXII

LEAVES NEW YORK TO DISCLOSE PLOT

For three days I stamped about the office, impatiently awaiting Defoe's coming, being assured each hour by Rivington that he had never so delayed before; fretting lest he may have been arrested, and our trio of secrecy was to be broken up. Fearful, too, that the delay was dangerous to the cause for which my anxiety kindled, hoping that André would not complete any arrangements before I should arrive at my destined point and notify my commander in time to prevent the completion of these arrangements, for Rivington had ascertained that André had, the night of the day in which he had visited our office, left the city and gone up the Hudson on the British sloop "Vulture."

At noon of the third day Defoe appeared. He had been sick of the mumps and could not venture out before, nor could he substitute another for the secrecy of the business prevented. With him, I again proceeded the length of the island, passed the guard at the King's Bridge, reaching his home about nightfall. This middle ground, visited and overrun by both sides in the desire to intercept each other, was extremely dangerous to ride by night, so I reluctantly passed the first night with my loyal conductor. The next morning he furnished me with a horse on which

I started forth at daybreak, and at a speed nearly equal to that with which I had ridden from my own home to the rendezvous at Fort Dayton the night of my extremely unfavorable interview with the Madame.

After the delay of three days, I argued that I would not be in time to intercept the preliminary negotiations of the conspirators, but hoped to frustrate any actual injury that might ensue from their negotiations. All in doubt as to the outcome, I hastened forward, resolving to let nothing deter me in my efforts, and praying that I should be in time.

From Defoe's place to the Robinson House was a distance of fifty miles. This latter place, a little below and across from West Point, was the headquarters of General Arnold. It was the same house occupied by General Washington previously, and wherein I had taken orders to act as a spy in the city at the time of my return from Lake Otsego, when Clinton launched forth to join Sullivan in their Indian expedition.

Defoe had informed me that Washington himself was at Hartford, where he was holding a conference with the French general, Rochambeau, and was expected back on this day. Then, thought I, Arnold, knowing this, has probably completed the arrangements, and West Point may now be in the hands of the enemy. For aught I knew, Clinton might have already sent detachments by water to occupy this place. My delay then, if this were the case, had given plenty of time for the carrying out of this great traitorous plot.

A heavy rainfall of the previous night made the roads especially bad. Deep pools of water and soft, oozy places made footing for the horse heavy and uncertain. This, added to the not overambitious spirit of the horse, combined to make my progress slow, and contributed to the stress of the situation. I had doubts as to the ability of my horse to hold out, and knowing no one about the country through which I was passing, I recognized the necessity of withholding the spur, lest overurging might completely fatigue the beast and make my plight worse. Exasperating it was to be compelled to move along so slowly when all my inner intent, the cause for which I served, demanded a speed that no longer could be forced.

At noon time one-fourth the distance was yet in front. At the present speed my jaded mount was capable of making, I did not hope to reach the objective point before the middle of the afternoon, or a little past. As the time wore away, the idea of what it would mean should I be in time to prevent the execution of the dastardly plot impressed me. That I was engaged in an attempt to abort the plans of my assistant deliverer of a few nights past worried me not, for I consoled such sentiment by recalling that it was in the name of patriotism that I was trying to override his purposes, and yet hoping that nothing ill might befall him.

A warmth of feeling did I experience as I came in sight of the Robinson House, where the General had his headquarters, the home of one Berkley Robinson, a

Tory at present in New York. Chafing under the delay occasioned by the guard who failed to pass me without first taking my name, I awaited his return, and then approached and entered the house.

Without ceremony, without even a salutation—my haste made me forget it—I burst in upon a conference composed of Generals Washington, Hamilton, Greene, and several others whose names are immaterial here.

The commander arose and greeted me at once, after my unceremonious utterance.

"What means this visit?" he said hurriedly; "not compelled to leave the city, were you?"

"Not that; I bring you important news, tidings you will regret hearing."

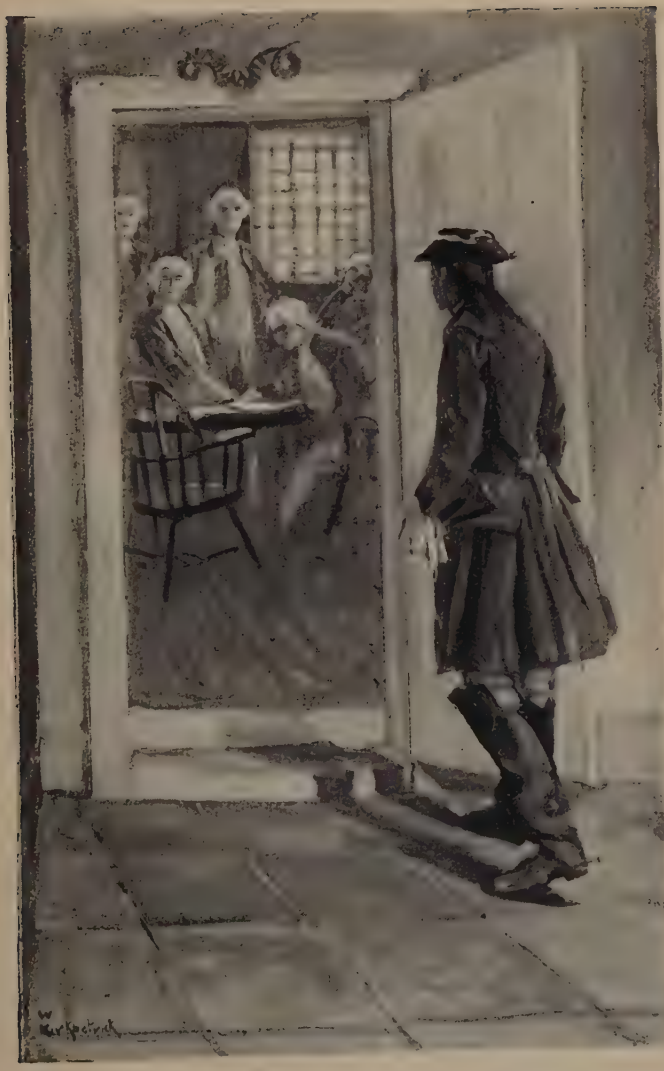
"What are they?" he said sadly. Afterwards I realized that he feared additional bad news to that which he already knew.

"Is General Arnold here?" I asked, as I glanced around the room. A mingled look of sadness and contempt preceded his answer.

"No, he has gone over to the enemy."

"Too late, too late," I cried. "I learned of this plot in the city and endeavored to reach you before this, but could not," and I explained the reason why.

"Would to God you had arrived two days ago, for then Arnold would have fallen into our hands, and not escaped." Following this he told me how André had left his ship, and came ashore to negotiate with the prince of dastards; the morning light breaking before



"I burst in upon a conference composed of Generals Washington, Hamilton, Greene, and several others."

the negotiations were ended, had compelled André to seek shelter in the home of one Smith, a tool in Arnold's hand; and of André's capture by the trio of patriots.

"Then the attempt was foiled," I added, "and of André?"

"In the prison jail here with us, under strong guard."

I did not express my regrets at this, but they were genuine, for I realized that my benefactor would pay the same price he had helped me to escape.

"How knew you of what was to be done by André?" asked the general.

"It is a long story; do you care to hear it now?"

"No; another time will do," as he took his seat.

This being the signal for me to go, I saluted and withdrew.

It was now nearly sundown, and I first looked after my horse and then quarters for myself. These I found readily, being warmly welcomed to a camp of a dozen men—men whom I had known when I, too, had served as they were now.

Seated about the camp fire that night, I listened to many tales of the experiences that they had passed through, tales of starvation and disease, of battles, wounds and sufferings, exploits and reverses. Some overdrawn and exaggerated perhaps, as may be the case, when under the stimulus of comradeship, soldiers repeat their tales of bravery and vicissitudes, but all tending to increase patriotism to its fullest develop-

ment. In turn did they question me. Where had I been? Why had I not returned to them before? How had I fared? All of these I answered in the same way—I had been where, if I chose to tell of, I might interest them, but was under the pledge of secrecy.

"Ah," said one, "I see, you have been a spy."

This I denied not, and it goes without saying that from this point on during my long stay here, for I went back to the city no more, the greatest courtesy was shown me, the utmost deference, for to them he whom the commander had chosen to occupy such position was worthy of their best. Important facts are soon known anywhere but in no place quicker than an army camp; the following day it was whispered about that the prisoner, André, would be removed down the river to Tappan, where he would be tried by the Army Board.

Among those who accompanied the prisoner down the river in the army transport, to the place where the Board were to consider his case and mete out justice and its stern verdict, was myself.

En route I looked upon this man to whom I felt so indebted; upon the man who could but feel his indebtedness to me. His pale face interested me as no other man's face ever did. Beautiful indeed was the setting of this face, with its clear, bright complexion, its honesty. His clean-cut eye betold the frank and openness of the concealed mind and soul. Especially did I like the curves of his honest mouth, the mouth that had offered me a bribe years before, that went not

unrebuked, and reflected the British conception of those with whom they were to deal. His calm face was lifted and on it was a look of resignation, rather than defiance. In irons he sat on deck and conversed with those about him, profusely thanking all who paid him little marks of attention.

My heart went out to him, and I longed to tell him who I was, and of my grief at his ill-luck and probable fate. A gloom was upon all during the sitting of the Army Board. Privates as well as officers commiserated the fate of him who they knew must suffer for another's sins.

After the verdict was announced an effort was made by his fellow-officers in New York to secure his release on technical grounds, claiming that he, invited by Arnold, had unwittingly passed our lines. The reply unofficially sent out and delivered was to the effect that André would be exchanged for Arnold. A fine sense of honor prevented the acceptance of this, and the hapless major fell a victim to the circumstances that his own desire for greatness and perfidy of another had forced.

The day before his execution, I betook me to the place of his confinement, a strong stone house of the neighborhood. I entered his room where he sat writing letters—as he later told me, to his friends whom he had known and loved. Was it possible, thought I, that a man who to-morrow is to die can be so composed, can greet those in whom he knows not that he is interested with such a smile of appreciation?

Extending my hand I addressed him. "Sir, I beg your pardon for this intrusion upon your time, but I think I owe to your assistance in certain matters my life, and am here to tell you of my gratitude."

"Why do you thus speak?" was the answer. "I know you not, yet something about your face tells me we have met before," as he scrutinized me closely.

"My name is VanHorn, Henry VanHorn."

He started. "Ah, I remember; 'twas you that was released from the Provost less than a week ago. Thank me not for this. It is to Miss Mortier that the thanks belong."

"But you assisted."

"Yes, in deference to her pleadings, and remembering a like favor from you at one time, my sympathies were aroused, and I did secure the signature of him whose signature was desirable."

"Tell me the details," I asked.

"No, reserve them for Miss Mortier to relate," he said as he glanced at me.

The subject was dropped here, and we talked of other things. He spoke of the life that he had lived, "devoted to honorable pursuits, and stained with no action that can give remorse," as he said; of his birth, his home and mother, and later his desire to become a soldier, his ambition after this, and last he mentioned the consequences that this ambition would bring to him.

For an hour or more did we talk until I arose to withdraw. I could not keep back the tears, as I bade

him good-by, and he, calm and concise as ever, said, "Deplore not my sad lot; rather seek to cheer me."

"How can this be done?" I asked eagerly.

"You mentioned your indebtedness to me; if you so consider it, would you do me in return a final favor?"

"If in my power."

"I would then that you consult with his excellency, General Washington, and intercede to the effect that I may die a soldier's death by shooting and not the felon's death on the gibbet. Perhaps it is a fine point to argue, but I desire that my last moments be not tinged with mortification as to the manner of my exit."

"I will do as you request," I said; "nay, I will do more, I will put my whole force and influence into my intercession, for to you I owe much."

"Tut," he said, "mention it not. On two former incidents we stand equally debtors; after this I will be your debtor, and for a long time."

He smiled faintly, then added, "Good-by."

As best I could I pleaded for him; as best I could I told my story of his benefits to me, omitting of course to say that, partially, they were rendered for a similar favor.

The commander was inexorable. He listened to what I had to say, then sadly made answer, "I blame you not for your views or for speaking as you do, for you owe to his humanity a great debt, but you owe this, and not I. What you ask is incompatible with the findings of the Board. One method of death for spies is prescribed in the 'Code.' I received a letter

from the unfortunate major to this same effect. I am powerless to alter or interfere as to the manner of his execution."

I did not, could not, attend the execution next day. Even those of stony heart who did came away in sorrow; others who had to do with it were either blinded by their tears or turned their heads to hide them. It was a noble life, snuffed out early—an example of the bitterness of war.

CHAPTER XXXIII

HOME AGAIN. AN EXPECTED VISITOR

The war of eight years was over. With the balance of His Majesty's armies defeated, Sir Henry Clinton still held New York, and while no direct terms of peace had as yet been declared, the British commander, hopelessly hemmed within the city, could do little now but wait for the return of peace and the order to come home.

Nearly two years had passed since the incidents chronicled in the preceding chapter. Following my departure from New York, when I had come to Washington, to prevent, if possible, the surrender of West Point, I had stayed on with his division while in this locality. Stayed on until Lafayette in the South sent word that Cornwallis was safely tied up in Virginia, and that it was time for a mighty blow to be struck.

I had passed southward with the division that had threatened New York to deceive Clinton as to their intents, and later had been of the ranks that had successfully hemmed in and finally forced the surrender at Yorktown. Then I had come northward with the army and had been about Newburg, where the general now took up his residence, for some time or until the autumn of the year previous to the one I now mention. Then, as my term of enlistment had long since expired,

and there being no danger of further hostilities, I resigned my position as lieutenant, to which rank on the recommendation to the Congress by Washington I had been raised after my return from New York. Coming home, back to the Mohawk country, I had again taken up the farm matters, and, now that the spring was here, had resumed my usual duties. The month of which I speak was June, when all nature is alive and glorious, when the leaves have spread to their fullest breadth of greenness, when the late orchids and early roses are in abundance. Of such as these of nature's treasures I had long since forgotten. My army life of five years had calloused my memory to such trifling things as the flowers of the fields, the songs of the birds.

Now that the long winter was over, through which just back from the carousing swing of camp life, I had spent in yawning away my hours, or perhaps in telling my mother and James Hastings of my experiences; pastimes that became tedious and dull, and the welcome guest of spring was received by me with great ardor. The ruin of the country about my home had before this seemed to be complete, for everywhere the settlers' log cabins, whose blanched walls had formerly shown, now were overrun with vines and briars, adding to the aspect of further desolation. But with the advent of spring, there had come mainly from the Massachusetts country, many immigrants, who found homes among us. In buying new homes many argued that these immigrants would restore our valley to the condition of prosperity that existed before the war.

Now the destroyed buildings about us were being replaced, and even so soon, save by empty sleeves or sad faces, a stranger could see but few evidences that would remind him that our country was scarcely over an eight years' war.

My own farm, although unmolested by war or marauders, was in bad shape and needed my constant care, since the going away of the snow. Already I had repaired fences, thatched the leaky barn roof with shingles that old Billy, Punk, and I had made from the straight riven pine, cut during the winter on the back knolls, at times when stories had grown old and books had been read so often as to be uninteresting.

Of my own people little can be said. My stepfather was as of old contented with his books, contented in the fact that he wanted for nothing, thankful for all these things, and still believing in his son's greatness, although my mother told me when I inquired that he had heard no word from him for a good two years. As his messages had been infrequent before, this lapse of time had not worried the father until recently. For, during the winter, when he, too, grown tired of incessant reading, had found time to reflect that mayhap his son was less friendly than he should have been. That he was in disrepute or perhaps dead did not enter the trusting father's mind. Nor could I then, had I been so disposed, inform him of the downfall of Gilbert. For the reader must remember that I had yet to learn the facts regarding him.

During the late fall, after my return, I had seen Paul Manning about his yard, walking feebly with a cane, his hair long, unkempt and strangely snowy, his face pale and wan; but I had not visited him as of yore. Once I had come by his gate while he was outside, and had answered his "Good-day, Henry, how do you do?" pleasantly enough, for his age and feebleness engulfed my aversion and forced courtesy by inquiring how he was and other commonplace remarks that I do not now remember.

For days during the deep snow of winter the only sign of habitation seen about his house was the smoke from his chimney, or perhaps a window raised and bread-crumbs put on the window-sill, to be eagerly devoured by the birds that had endured the hard winter. I had sent old Billy down several times during the winter to shovel the snow from out the paths about his home, so that he might get about if he so desired or to fetch the wood piled near by for his fire. Billy always returned with some little present for his pains, and, besides this, often bore a greeting to me. Had he brought a request to visit Paul I should probably have gone to him, but as none came I did not. Hard-hearted I may have been to my old friend, but it did not occur to me that he merited less than coldness.

Billy had reported him very feeble all winter, and now that the warm weather had come, I thought that under the effect of its balminess he would improve, but such was not the case.

"He is berry, berry bad, Mars Henry," Billy reported one day, returning from his home. I inquired further into his condition, and found that Paul had not arisen from his bed that day. Straightforth I ordered Billy to carry him food regularly each day and to look after him as his comfort might require. This Billy did, taking him meals daily from our table, looking after his every want, administering to him as a mother might to her child, going to his home late at night and early morn, of his own volition sometimes, or on my suggestion. The object of these attentions grew weaker day by day.

Washington from his post on the Hudson, feeling that nothing in particular demanded his presence, had planned a trip for himself and staff. The proposed trip was northward through Albany to Saratoga, where he would view the battle-ground on which Burgoyne met defeat and surrender, thence to Ticonderoga and Crown Point, returning southward by way of Schenectady, here to traverse the Mohawk Valley west to Fort Stanwix.

The inhabitants of Schenectady had known of his coming and prepared a grand fête in his honor. All the patriots of the valley had been invited by a post express that had ridden through for this purpose, and I, as an officer, had been the recipient of a special note from the "Committee of Citizens," asking me "to attend and occupy such place in the parade as becometh one of your standing."

I had debated as to what I had best do, and was as

yet undecided when a note came by a special express to me one day, this express having been dispatched ahead to make arrangements for the coming party, and to notify the garrisons at Forts Plain, Dayton, and Stanwix to put things in shape for a visit from the commander, so that pleasure might attend his first and only trip through the Mohawk Valley. The note I received was from the distinguished man himself, and stated that dates could not be exactly fixed, yet he would soon pass my home and would stop and pay me a visit. This decided me, for I cared naught for show or to witness the demonstration to which I had been invited. Now that I was to receive a visit from the general, I would await him here and refrain from the journey down the river.

The day in which this call upon me was really made, I was at work in the field, when the bushes that lined the clearing at my right parted, and there strode forth a bulky form, carrying upon his back a long gun. I need not tell you that my visitor was none less than he who had been introduced before, one that perhaps single-handed saw more fighting and drew more of the enemy's blood than any other man—Tim Murphy.

"Bedad yez didn't expect me, did ye?" was his salutation, "but I'm here."

"No, Tim, I did not, but am glad to see you. Why are you here?"

"Ah, ha. I coomed to see the Gineral," he said. "He comes this way, don't he?"

As the day was nearly spent we walked to the house,

and after Murphy had saluted all in his humorous and ludicrous way, he and I were seated outside, when we, looking down the river, saw an approaching party, a party that I later learned, besides the general and staff, contained General William Clinton, the Clinton who had made the descent of the Susquehanna from Lake Otsego. We knew at once, from the gorgeous make-up of the officers and the blazoned trappings of horses, that the party we looked upon was that of the expected visitors.

I already knew that the general himself would stop at Peter Wormuth's for the night, leaving the others of his party to stay at the fort, and now that it was toward the supper hour and the party being fatigued, that the call upon me would perhaps not be made until morning, when the general would come over to our side of the river to inspect the fort.

"Will yez go to Wormuth's to-night, Hinnery?" said Murphy.

"No," I answered, "Washington will be too tired to receive us to-night. We will watch in the morning, and when the party leaves the house, we can go to the fort and after the inspection accompany him here."

Here the supper was announced, at which we went inside and partook, coming back afterwards and being seated as before. Below we could see men at the fort preparing places for the horses, a great bustle and stir as the party spread about making their preparations for the night.

We talked of our former meetings, of each other's trials since we met; Murphy telling of hair-breadth escapades of his own, wherein Indians had suffered the vengeance of his dislike for their race.

Billy at the supper hour had departed for Paul Manning's with the food that constituted Paul's evening meal, and returning now broke in upon these reminiscences, "Mars Henry, Paul 'spectively ask me to say to yous, Mars Henry, would yous come down and see him at once."

"What does he want?" I asked.

"Oh, Lordy, I dunno. He talks about dyin', says he can't lib and worries dat you may not comed. Go, Mars Henry, go, for if Paul dies, you dun wish den you'd gone."

"I will go," I said, yet not forgetting the transaction that had taken place when I had entered his door the last time.

"I will go with youse," said Murphy, and together we walked down the road to his place.

Going to the kitchen door, for fear of disturbing him, I did not stop to knock, but entered at once. I had not given Billy's assertion that Paul was bad off and near death's door much thought, and expected to find him as of yore seated in his kitchen, and was surprised to find this room vacant. Followed by Murphy I went forward and entered his bedroom. Glancing toward him, I was struck by the emaciated and shrunken face as he lay back upon the pillow, eyes closed and not seeming to notice our presence. I

walked up and took his thin hand in mine; it seemed so cold that I started. His eyes opened.

"How are you, Paul?" I managed to say, for the first time ashamed of my course toward him.

His voice, rather firm, for all his deathlike looks and cold hands, answered slowly and distinctly, "Henry VanHorn, my day is far spent, I am about to die. Before I shall close my eyes and enter eternity there are many words I wish to say, and who if not you, who was once my friend, is eligible to hear them?"

He closed his eyes and again the deathlike look that I had observed at first came over his features. Murphy, whom Paul had as yet not noticed, sat down in a chair near by.

"Paul will soon awake," I said to him.

I sat down on the bed, still holding his hand. Some few minutes passed. The only evidence of the sleeper's hold on life was manifested in his short, quick breathing.

Outside I heard the tramp of horses' feet. I wondered who was passing. These sounds passed the place and proceeded toward my home. I did not care to loose the hand I held and go to see who my visitors were, fearing to wake the sleeper, preferring to have him thus store his fading energies against the time he would tell what he wished to say, a story that I felt would be interesting. For a few minutes yet did he drowse, till finally he opened his eyes and looked at me in a queer sort of way.

"Ah, Henry," came his words, "I remember, I sent for you, and he who is with you, I remember. He was here once before."

Was I mistaken in thinking that the remembrance of the former visit of Murphy pained him?

He appeared much refreshed and brightened by his rest. "For months during the winter I have hoped you would visit me," he went on, as he turned his eyes upon me, "but my hopes were vain, and finally there came to me the conviction that to fulfill my desire of seeing and talking with you again, I should be obliged to ask you to come to me. This have I delayed doing from day to day, hoping that your aversion would change, being all this while the recipient of your kindness, for without Billy how could I have procured fuel for the fire, to say nothing of preparing what little it has taken to feed the fast-decaying body that was past building up? Let me say before I shall go farther and while yet my strength lasts, that your kindness was not lost on me, even though I thought you a little hard. Remembering these benefits and that you are here at my bidding, all my ill feeling has vanished, and, my boy, I yet love you."

Tears flowed down the wan cheeks. Feebly he raised his hand to wipe them away. I saw his intention, and, withdrawing the kerchief from my bosom, I, myself, wiped his eyes dry of the tears shed over my coldness. Words that expressed my feelings came to me slowly.

"Paul, forgive me," I said.

"Nay, it were not your fault; you had reasons and

the best. But of that let us pass now. Let me rest again, ere I relate the story of my life, the story that I hope will partially vindicate me in your eyes—the story that had I the courage to have told before perhaps might have lightened my burden. But of this I thought not nor considered until your coldness brought it to my attention. In keeping an unenforced silence, I have borne the sins of the fathers."

He rested now a little, while his breath came faster and laboriously. I became convinced that he had but few hours, perhaps less, to live. As I sat and held his hand, my coldness toward him gave me many pangs, and anew there came to me the same love for this man as had marked my boyhood days, mingled with the conviction that I had wronged him grossly, for had he not said that he had suffered for others' sins? Now, I inwardly prayed that he might live on, that in the days to come, I, knowing him innocent, could prove to him that I again believed in and honored him; at least that he might live to speak his own vindication.

He was not sleeping now, simply resting; resting with his eyes fixed upon me in mute token of his love.

Outside I again heard the hoof-falls of horses coming from the direction whence the others went. The noise of the steeds ceased as they came on a line with Paul's doorway. I nodded to Murphy to go and see who came. Silently he passed his ponderous form without. I heard voices in conversation directly thereafter, then Murphy entered and beckoned me to pass out. I did so, leaving him at my post.

A keen surprise was in store for me, for outside I beheld no less a personage than the expected guest, the one who had deigned to notice me and sent me notice of the call he would make. It was General Washington, who, having ascertained from neighbor Wormuth that I lived handy by, had come that night with one escort to pay the promised visit. He had gone to my home and on being told my whereabouts had retraced his steps to where I saw him. Hurriedly I explained the situation, told him we were at Paul Manning's cabin, and that the owner now lay on his deathbed; otherwise I should have returned with him to my home.

"It is enough," he said; "your duty is here, but cannot I see and personally thank this man for his great favor to us? I had intended thus. Alas, that I should find him near death's door." Together we entered the house.

The sun, yet an hour high in the west, passed its rays through the small window and illuminated the room and brought out the fine angelic lines of the dying man's face, a face such as only those who have lived and suffered are gifted with.

"See, Paul," I said gently, as I approached the bed, "see who has visited you. It is General Washington."

A smile of welcome passed over Paul's face as he feebly raised his hand and took the one offered him.

"I am proud," said he "that you should thus honor me. It is a distinction undeserved."

The general spoke in a dignified voice. "I am pleased that I have the honor to call on you, to whom

our cause owes much. Knowing that you resided hereabouts, I intended to look in upon you and thank you for that great favor given, but I am grieved to find you ill. Would that you yet had many days."

"No, it is not for me to continue this life. Henry is here to listen to my story, the tale of my life, that I am anxious to finish before life itself is finished."

"Then I am glad to have seen you and will withdraw."

"If it will not tire you, I would that you stay and listen, desiring that you learn the source whence came the wealth I transmitted to your armies," came the answer.

"At your request, I will stay," as he seated himself in the chair Murphy handed him, Murphy taking position at the foot of the bed, while I, obedient to the motion of Paul's eye, again sat by his side and took his hand.

CHAPTER XXXIV

PAUL'S STORY

For several minutes the sick man waited as if to gain strength before he spoke. Our eyes were riveted upon him, anxiously waiting the return of his strength when he would commence the tale.

At last he spoke, "What I am to say I say not to refute or confound my maligners, not that they may even hear or know of my past life; but rather that I who soon will live only in the memory of my friends, will in the eyes of those friends be set aright.

"My birthplace was Salem, near Boston. My father was a poor expounder of the ideas of the English Church. I say 'poor,' but only in this world's goods was he poor, for rich was he in principle and uprightness. Alas, that I should not have lived up to his example. Two children came to bless him and my mother, myself and a sister. Of the sufferings of the family, of the almost persecution, undeserved and coming from the Puritans, who rejected my father as a hireling of the Crown, let me pass over unmentioned. But let me say that early in life, at the age of fourteen, the family's finances demanded help, and I was according hired out in the office of a British Marine Company in Boston. Here life, at first a

round of homesickness and disappointments, finally in the next three years, as I became more acquainted with the ways of a world larger than I had hitherto known, became a pleasure. I lived in the home of the Marine Company's agent, an English appointee. The family consisted of the father mentioned, the wife, and a daughter of about my age. For reasons of my own I will withhold their names. In a fatherly and motherly way did the parents of this house preside over me, and I became as one of them, and their many kindnesses to me have yet left for them in my heart a warm place.

"They were the representatives of the refinement of the middle class of their own country, and as such they made me long, too, for things worldly and æsthetic. While they lived in a more aristocratic manner than many residents, they bore themselves as worthy of all they possessed, both in matters of position and means, for the salary of the agent was not small. However, my own salary, though small was sufficient, and after paying for board and furnishing me with needed clothes, the balance was sent regularly to the home in Salem, where though it was a mere pittance, it relieved somewhat the stress of poverty that I knew so well existed there.

"At the age of eighteen two incompatible facts manifested themselves to me. First, the conviction that I was poor; second, that I was in love with the daughter of the man with whom I resided. I say incompatible, for me it seemed so. To support a wife with my meager salary would, I knew, be asking too much of a sacrifice

of one who had lived as had my Hettie. My affection had been a matter of slow evolution; it had grown on me from the time I had first entered this home. There were evenings spent around the family hearth, in which I joined in the general conversation or alone conversed with this daughter. There were little rides about the country, for the stable contained riding horses at our disposal. These places and times, it was, that first kindled the love that grew faster than my means, one seeking to stifle the other, and partly successful at that. For two years did I keep my love a secret, hoping that circumstances might change and make it possible for to speak, for from certain little incidents that I recalled with pleasure I felt that it was not unrequited.

"At last there came a day when the agent spake to me kindly, that in view of my faithful services I was to be rewarded by an increase of compensation, in fact the money I drew for my services was to be nearly doubled. The joy I felt was second only to that which was to follow, for later that afternoon, while riding with Hettie, I spoke first of my good fortune and finally, as my ardor led me on, I spoke of other things, of my love for her. She at first appeared pleased that my funds were to be increased, lending to me comfort, and when I spoke of the matter nearest my heart, she avowed her love for me as a thing of long standing, and as something that would be perpetuated. Many days and months passed by, during which we kept our secret from others of the household. There were pleasant moments for bits of conversation, when the others

might withdraw; there were little times for heart-to-heart pledges and confessions, perhaps, when with clasped hands we looked into each other's faces—in fact there were many opportunities for love-making, opportunities that the parents did not guess were being used as they were. While returning from one of our rides one day, through Charlestown, and coming in sight of the North Church, I proposed that we go to the clergyman in charge, and be wedded. To this she agreed, and the clergyman, seeing that we were of proper age, raised no objection. I did not then consider, that in any way, was I playing upon the confidences of the parents, for love knows no obligations or promptings of conscience that it is bound to recognize in bringing about its own desire.

"On the way home my beautiful Hettie expressed fear as to the reception awaiting us, when her people should learn of our marriage. For the first time I realized that my course had been unmanly, realized that months ago I should have consulted him who was now my father-in-law about our mutual love. But this same love had blinded me to my proper obligations, and now I, too, feared the result.

"At the dinner table that evening I, using all the adroitness at my command, spake out the truth as regarded Hettie and myself. A thunderbolt from a clear sky could have caused no more consternation in the minds of that father and mother. Like shot from a parapet did their denunciations fall upon me. I had ruined his household, I, a worthless man, had stolen his

daughter, she, whom he and her mother had planned all the years to marry brilliantly and well. 'Why,' said he, 'you cannot even give our daughter half the home pleasures she has heretofore enjoyed and yet you have stolen the love of a mere child.' (She was as old as I.) So he went on with his abuse, the mother crying meanwhile, and Hettie sobbing likewise on my breast. For myself, I said but little by way of justification—otherwise than that our great love for one another had blossomed forth spontaneously, and while I now recognized the propriety of first consulting a father about his daughter's hand, had not considered this before. In the end, as always, the parental blessing was pronounced, though I doubt if genuine forgiveness accompanied it.

"The next few years, during which we lived under the roof of the father of my wife, were years of regret and mortification to me. During these years I learned much of life's lesson, learned to repent of my rashness in marrying, not by reason of any shortcoming of my wife, far from it. She was more to me than life. Each day added richness to my love for her, but the contributory cause of my sorrow was the poverty before mentioned. Through my father-in-law's influence my salary had been increased, yet, even now, I was scarce able to provide my wife and self with what our manner of living required, for in the home of a British marine agent one could not be frugal or careful as to expenditures. In this home I was but an adjunct and was compelled to submit to seeing my wife provided for

nearly as much as before our marriage, and this even after my own money was exhausted.

"My father now had to provide for himself entirely, for the remittances from me were a thing of the past. My sister had married, which circumstance lightened the burden somewhat at home, else suffering there would have added to my uneasiness of mind.

"Each day little things were said and done that contributed to my ill ease, not that my wife's parents snubbed me or in any way endeavored to remind me of my dependence upon them, but I was forced to listen to their various plans, pertaining to expenditures and entertainments, in which I, being dependent, had no voice. Had I the heart, I should have insisted on bringing my wife to an establishment of our own. This matter I considered, but for love of her dreaded to mention removing her from the home of her childhood, wherein she felt free and had no hesitation in accepting its hospitality, funds, or presents, to one where poverty and economy would rule. I had not mentioned my state of mind concerning this matter to my wife, but often had she questioned me as to the cause of my moodiness on particular occasions. My answer each time had been unenlightening. I had hoped for a chance to do better, but as time passed, I came to know that in my present capacity nothing new or better awaited me. However, something did transpire that changed my life from this time on. Alas, that my desire for wealth should so have turned my head."

The latter part of what Paul had already related had come as though he labored hard. His breathing became quick again, and at this point I spoke and requested him to rest before he continued farther. He smiled wanly, and still holding my hand, closed his eyes, and rested for a little while. At last, Murphy still at the foot of the bed, shifted uneasily, and Paul opened his eyes and resumed the story.

"The incident that I referred to was the death of my father that occurred on a Sunday, suddenly, as he finished service. Of course, I was called home at once, attending to the funeral and the family affairs, moving my mother to the home of her daughter, whose husband was in no condition to support more than he already did. I promised to assist in my mother's support, wondering as I did from where I could possibly provide the funds to do so.

"From the effects of my father, I brought away with me, besides some few books, a small oaken casket, the sight of which had been familiar to me since childhood, but the interior or contents of which I had never seen. I was scarcely back again, when from shock at the death of my father, my mother also died. Again I went back to Salem. Two months later, as I had no key, I broke open the casket that had been my father's, and its contents were disclosed to me. First came the orders of my father, as an Episcopal divine, next a pile of letters, these of various texts, such as he had thought best to preserve. At the extreme bottom of this pile of letters, and completing the contents of the casket,

I came upon a musty and ill-looking document of dirty exterior, whose contents held my attention. It was a letter of length written by my father's father, to him, many years before. As I read it, I found confirmation of what had been told me of my grandfather, that he was a seafaring man, and had come home to die in the house of his son. This letter he had written while on his way home, for he was sick nigh unto death, and fearing that he might not live to reach the port of Salem, had thought it best to leave this document, but should he so live, it would serve the same purpose, and save him the embarrassment of telling the story it contained.

"As I read on I came across facts that told me plainly that my grandfather had lived the life of a sea-roving buccaneer, and that in this capacity, by his own confession, he had assisted in most rapacious and heartless slaughter in plundering the Spanish Main. While he gave no details of any atrocities, yet he confessed them fully and freely, and tried not to justify these acts in any way. Thus did I read on and on into the history of his unlawful acts, the laying bare of a life of which even my father knew naught. Grandfather for many years had been the captain of a whaler, and in this capacity had been regularly at home. On the death of his wife, his son (my father) refusing to accompany him, he had deserted the boy, then a lad of seventeen, and sailing away with as rough a crew as could be gathered anywhere, had not returned, so I understood, until he was about to die.

"Farther on I came across information that interested me. After casually mentioning a recent transaction by which he and the crew had been large gainers, he stated that they, the crew, 'believed that much treasure, derived from this last expedition, is in the ship's coffers awaiting distribution; they are not aware of why we are going northward; they think we are searching for other prizes; they even expect me to regain my health, but I know this is not to be. Instead of bringing this treasure home, I have deceived them, for when I leave this ship, excepting the allowance I have given the mate for each of the crew, I shall leave them empty-handed and announce that the mate is to succeed me in command, and that I will sail the brine no more; that this ship and its contents are theirs. Methinks there will be a great howl of curses ascending when they, after putting to sea, find that the treasure is not there, for it is not. Where? It lies buried on the coast of Yucatan. Just where, the map I leave here will reveal. I placed it there myself and alone. On a dark night, with a small boat, I put to shore with a good load of doubloons, and brought them to where the map will show. You, my son, have groveled in poverty too long, preaching a fallacy without pay, for one day at Caracas I fell in with a captain from Salem who told me you had turned divine. Then do so no more, but renounce your creed; go and secure this treasure, and with it live as I have lived since your mother died, a life free and abounding in pleasure.'"

Paul motioned to me that he would now rest.

CHAPTER XXXV

PAUL FINISHES HIS STORY—AND DIES

"HENRY," said Paul feebly, as he roused, "draw forth the leathern packet from beneath my pillow."

I complied, and opening, handed it to him. He fumbled a moment in its interior, then drew forth a soiled paper, opened it and continued: "This is the accursed map."

Paul's auditors leaned over and beheld irregular marks on the paper, marks that in outline might have been taken for the peninsula of Yucatan itself, or any other similar-shaped projection. Painfully he resumed the story: "From that time on my fate was sealed. The knowledge that in far Yucatan, there awaited me a fortune, was turned over in my mind a thousand times a day, rang in my ears by night. Daily life at my home became more obnoxious. Daily did I long for a change. At first, that I should ever go in quest of this treasure and use it seemed by the measure of my conscience to be a remote possibility; but as the desire for wealth, for a change from dependence to a life of independence became more pressing, I finally argued that should I find this treasure and use it, I would be wronging no one.

"To my wife I had said nothing of my grand-

father's life, but when finally I could no longer hold myself back, and decided that to go for the treasure was the only appeaser of my longings, I told both her and her father the story and my decision. My wife, of course, for a time tried to dissuade me, but finding me obdurate, she in tears consented. My father-in-law had little to say on the subject, one way or the other, and I believe he then and there began an intrigue against me.

"For some years I had known the captain of a large and stout whaleboat, and to him did I take my story and map, pledging him first to secrecy, and at last offering him a quarter of the treasure, should we find it. The season had been especially bad for him and he, in need of funds, readily assented to my proposition. Neither he nor I had money to fit out the vessel for this long cruise, and although but eight men besides ourselves were to go along, yet these must be provided for. How to do this I did not know, but as a last resort begged my father-in-law that he furnish the necessary means. He agreed at once, and to my surprise assisted in the further arrangement for the voyage. It was hard to leave my wife behind, but buoyed by the assurance of wealth and opulence, I dried her eyes with words of confidence as to the outcome, and we loosed the cable and were off.

"Five months later, for our sails were short and necessitated slowness and besides a hurricane had blown us far from our course, we arrived on the east coast of the peninsula of Yucatan. The map was, as you see, irregular, but to all appearances meant to represent the

whole peninsula itself, and so did we treat it, going around and to the southern side, where my grandfather had marked the location of a certain cave, wherein was stored the pilfered Spanish wealth.

"Three weeks' search up and down this coast convinced us that there was no such place as described in this location. Mortified at our failure to locate the much desired spot, closing my ears to the uncivil utterances of the bark's captain, I studied the map carefully, and from certain discrepancies in the outline, saw that we had been in error as to our understanding of its meaning. While this map in a way represented the whole shore line of Yucatan, I now well knew that the place we sought was by itself a little jutty of land somewhere on the mainland, and that the maker of the map had in his sickness and hurry forgotten to precisely mention. We had sailed east not more than a day after this, when we espied a point of land that exactly fitted the lines on the paper. With the instructions of my grandfather in my hand, I took two men with me, and touching my foot to the soil where, for aught I knew, none had trod since the days of him who had stored away the treasure.

"Rocks in plenty were near by, yet none covered the mouth of a small cave, as the instructions said, so far as I could see. Walking back some hundred rods toward the interior, I came upon more rocks that tallied with what I sought, inasmuch as they were hovered about a small opening in the hillside that bordered on these rocks.

"I had left the men in the boat, so that none saw me in my wild efforts as I rammed through this opening that was hardly high or wide enough to allow my body to pass.

"Inside, I pressed my body back to the wall, so that the light could penetrate. It was some moments before my eyes became accustomed to the semi-gloom. Finally a few gleaming darts were discernible, darts of light that I supposed penetrated through the opening, but on examination I found to be but the reflection of light from the interior, from something that now filled the interior of the cave with fire glinting rays. At first I could not understand, then it broke over me that the fire-darts were caused by the sun shining on gold. Thrilled to the heart's centre, I cried, 'Gold! gold! gold!'

"I rubbed my eyes to make sure. Yes, it was there before me in a cone-shaped heap on the ground. Why had my father toiled in poverty so many years, with this knowledge of wealth that could be had so easily? Principle? It did not occur to me that there was a word by that name. Honesty? Then I knew it not.

"Going closer, I examined this pile of gold, and found that, as my grandfather had said, it was of Spanish doubloons. The working of my mind assumed a state of excited nervousness. I danced around and around this heap of wealth as a witch might dance around her mystic pot. I sang and hallooed in my delirium, for it was a delirium that took hold of me and temporarily mastered my sanity. Why should I not so

perform, said I, as I surveyed before me the gold of Ophir, enough to ransom an empire's ruler, aye, and purchase the empire itself. For I had then no conception of the real worth of what was before me. I felt this gold in my hand. I raised up double handfuls and let the pieces slip through my fingers. I even put some to my mouth, to taste it. When I had indulged my joy over what was later to change joy to gall, I went slowly back, loath to leave.

" As the men knew that our trip was in quest of hidden wealth, but nothing more, I said naught to them of my find. Rowing out to the vessel, I invited the captain into the cabin, and told him I had located the wealth. That night, while he purposely relieved the watch so as to avoid detection, we together went ashore, and with the aid of a torch located and brought away with us some three buckets of the shining gold pieces, which were stored in the double strong-box of the captain's cabin, and the next morning we hoisted sail and made for the Massachusetts coast.

" Again did the Caribbean storms hamper us and twice blow us out of our course, delaying the progress that I hoped might be fast. At last, after nine months' absence, we reached the port of Boston.

" From the treasure that I or the captain had guarded by day and night, lest the small crew, who mistrusted that we had found and in some way smuggled our quest aboard, should try and wrest its ownership from us, I paid the captain his quarter and gave him a present in addition to the wages for each of the crew.

"Landing, I found that I, who had hoped to find a warm welcome awaiting me, a welcome that would raise my pleasure above what it was when I found the doubloons, was doomed to disappointment. Alas, she, my wife, had gone with her father, gone back to England. Now I saw the reason for his freely given assistance. I knew he had moved my wife where, should I ever return from this chasing after a myth as he thought, I would never find her, at least so he hoped. With tauntings of my social unworthiness and of my poverty, he had secured her consent to desert me.

"My treasure I stored in an iron box that is under this bed, the same that you, Henry, and Murphy, saw me open, and on a swift-sailing vessel I, too, sped across the water in search of my wife, who by the father's persuasion had preceded me.

"The first thing I did in London was to deposit my gold with several different banking houses, and drawing a goodly supply of notes, started out in search of the lost wife. No means or pains did I spare, and though it seemed impossible that one could so hide, yet for one year and a half did I continue, some times disheartened to the point of stopping, and then again taking up the chase with renewed zeal. At last disheartened, I gave it up, and myself to wandering about the continent of Europe, going about wherever I saw fit, seeing much and doing much, for I hoped that chance would return to me my lost wife.

"For five years did I wander, first on this and then on the other side of the Atlantic, sometimes shipping as a

common sailor, sometimes living at resorts on the Continent, living as a nabob, indulging in pastimes that I should have left alone, or in dissipation; my money, all this while, in the banking house in London at my call.

"At last I returned to this latter city, resolved on a final search, a search that should be so ramifying as to leave no doubt; that should I find no trace, would satisfy me that the one in question was not within the city's precincts.

"The first day after arriving I found the name of my father-in-law in a list of the city's citizens, although I had examined this list repeatedly before. It was plain that then living outside, he had recently taken up his latest quarters.

"Losing no time, I went at once to his home. It was not strange that he did not know me, so altered was my appearance, so gray had become my locks from worry and disappointment. Once inside his drawing-room, I told him who I was. 'Oh, God!' he said, 'is it you, or your ghost?' I supposed his remarks were caused by reason of my changed appearance, for from a man of twenty-five, when he last saw me, I had grown into a man much older in years and appearance.

"'My wife,' I asked, 'where is she?' He did not answer this, nor would he tell me, even after my most earnest solicitation. He did not ask me of my expedition in search of my grandfather's hidden treasures. No, he treated me as an impostor, and finally ordered me from his home.

"For three days I shadowed his house, and on the last one I saw him and his wife pass out and enter their carriage. My own driver followed, and marking well the place where they alighted, a fashionable house in a fashionable street, I drove away, intending to return later. This was what I wanted. Therein must be my wife, but why here? I saw—she must have again married. Oh, God, did she, could she, even if instigated by her father, marry another, while I yet lived?

"That night, after the dark had fallen, I drove again to the place, and leaving the carriage, quietly mounted the portico of the house, from where I could look through the pane and into the drawing-room—I looked in, and beheld a scene of domestic happiness, such as I had hoped for. A fine, alert, medium-aged man, reading by a candle cluster's light, and a woman, my wife, seated by the open hearth, bouncing on her knee a boy, who perhaps might have been three years of age. Had I a pistol then, I would have died on that porch.

"The mother's face was aged some, I noted, as the firelight flickered up, showing her more plainly, and her hair had some gray among the black, yet on her face was contentment. I looked for some mark there which showed sadness, showed that she yet thought of me. Again the fire blazed up. I riveted my eyes upon her. No such mark was visible. In its place there was the stamp of happiness, without a trace or a line of sadness. For her, love with wealth was contentment.

"I staggered away, and became a rover again, this

time storing my banknotes in the same box that had held the gold. Returning to America, I looked up my sister, and made her and her husband comfortable for life. A few years afterward I was on one of these trips that began anywhere but never ended when I came upon Klaus VanHorn in Albany.

"I had long looked for a quiet place without the world where I could stay and roam no more. On his description of this Mohawk country, I saw it fitted my ideal, and I came here with him, bringing my accursed wealth with me, and here at last in the person of him who holds my hand, then a little boy, there came to me a little happiness, the first I had known in many years. You know the rest, know of my life here, that year after year grew brighter in the love I bore for him. At last I saw him go away to the war, and thought that I, too, could contribute, not service, but money to this cause."

"Aye," said Washington, who had listened with his eye intently fixed upon the speaker, "'twas noble of you."

It was plain that Paul's story would not be told entire unless it were more briefly stated, as his breath came faster, and his voice was now so low that we, after craning our necks toward him, had to pay the strictest attention lest we lose what he was saying. After I had raised his head higher and made his articulation easier, he continued: "At one time there were told hereabout stories to the effect that I personally had been a sea pirate. They were but the prattlings of a

settler who passed through, but they left their sting, and were it not for a boy and girl here, who never doubted me, I should then have left this locality forever; a boy and a girl, who, as they became older, I hoped would marry, but I fear it was not to be."

I felt the color mounting to my cheeks, as I knew the general's eyes were upon me. Murphy interrupted with a " perhaps yit, perhaps yit, who knows? "

Not noticing this, the speaker went on: " As the years went by, I learned to believe that my great desire for wealth, a love too strong in God's sight, had, as a matter of punishment, brought to me my trouble and made me to suffer the sins of the fathers, for there was solace only in the friendship of these two young people. Believing this, I made a vow that as God had so chastened me, I would never make an effort to deny anything said or thought of me, that I would keep my secret until such time as I considered I was about to die, and then tell it, as I am doing."

He was now scarcely speaking above a whisper, so I leaned low my ear to his mouth, as I caught the words, " The iron box."

Laying him back again, assisted by Murphy, I drew this box from its resting place, and at a look from Paul reached in his bosom and took out a key he wore suspended from his neck. " This key," he faintly said, " opens yon chest. When I am gone, you may open it. Its content, a small part of what originally was there, represents only the balance left of what I had saved for my own maintenance. Years ago, I intended giv-

ing all to you, but afraid that it would bring you the same ill luck that attended me as its owner, and wishing to make reparation for the past misdeeds of my grandparent, I gave what I did to the army's cause."

Here the general, who had listened attentively, arose, approached the bed, and taking Paul's hand from mine, said to him, "I have been deeply interested in your tale; in fact, none other ever held my attention closer. You did what any man would have done so situated, and your last act places the balance of justification on your side. I am grateful to have seen you, and hope for your recovery."

So saying, he passed outside, I following to bid him good-night.

Before morning, in the presence of Murphy and myself, Paul Manning died.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FINIS

I was sitting outside and alone, for it was toward evening, and the day's work was completed. It was the day Murphy had departed, that day when, in his own dooryard, as he had requested, we had buried Paul Manning. Also, it was two days after Washington had inspected the garrison at Fort Plain, had passed on up the river to Fort Stanwix, there to return southward by Lake Otsego, where he would inspect the past work of General Clinton while at the lake, work that Washington, when at Fort Plain, reminded me that I had planned.

All day long had my mind been absorbed with thoughts of Jeanne. It was impossible for me to go to her. Why did not I hear from her? Rivington would have gladly passed outside any word that she wished to send me.

Now I recalled that she had promised that when all obstacles were overcome, she would come to me. These obstacles I thought meant Gilbert and her mother's aversion, or was it hatred, for me? Not knowing that which had befallen Gilbert, I now worked myself into a frenzy, dreaming that perhaps between him and her mother they had again coerced Jeanne into giving her consent to a marriage with him.

Thus on did I think, as the sun sank lower and lower, almost now ready to hide itself over the hills, at the west. Was I mistaken, for I thought I heard the rumble of a wagon somewhere down the river.

From where I sat I commanded a full view so far down as the winding hills permitted. A minute and there came into view far below, from around a bend in the river, a coach. On, on, it came, up the river. At the Fort it halted, as the driver craned his head downward to catch the order from inside. Abruptly they turned to the left and crossed the ford.

As I speculated who it might be, forgetting her who had occupied my thoughts a few minutes previously, forgetting the sore spot in my heart made by the revelation of Paul Manning's story, for now I realized that indeed I had greatly wronged him, I decided that with the Madame's house burned and Paul Manning dead, I had reason to believe that visitors of my own approached.

I sat unmoved, as they came closer, and finally were upon me. Not a word spake the driver, as he dismounted and opened the chaise door. Courtesy bade me call Billy, as I rose from my seat and approached the carriage, that he might come and attend the horses and driver. Walking out to meet my unknown guest, I arrived just as the lone occupant stepped from the vehicle, a woman—Jeanne.

After a simple exchange of greetings, and as Billy and the coach driver passed out of earshot, she said simply and with blushes, "I have come to you."

"Jeanne, Jeanne," was all I could find to say. Mother came forward to see who the guest might be, readjusting her eyeglasses meanwhile, as if in doubt who the visitor was.

"Mother," I said, "it is Jeanne." And then, as I thought what this coming back meant, I added, "your daughter to be."

Late that evening, as we sat in the double seat beneath the towering maple that sheltered the doorway, she told me of her mother, who, since the church episode when she and Gilbert were to marry, had grown more and more afraid that her daughter would some day turn Gilbert aside and marry me. Then she told me of his arrest and confinement, and of her being a witness to his downfall, and how after this, Sir Henry Clinton, remembering the animosity that existed between him and André, after the latter's death refused to intercede or act in any way in his case. Not knowing what to do, fearing to send me word lest I should attempt to again see her and thus expose myself once more in the enemy's city, she had waited, feeling, she knew not why, that emancipation was near. Her mother's death—she told of it with many tears—had removed all barriers, so, meeting friends about to journey to Albany by boat, she accompanied them to this latter place, and after spending the night with them, she, with no protection save her own modesty and wit, had in a single day come from her friends to me. "For so I promised you," she said.

Then did I listen to the story of her actions the night

"'She said simply—'I have come to you.'"

of my arrest. For my release she claimed not much credit, insisting that André had played the major part in it.

"And of Gilbert?" I asked; "where is he now?"

"Dead," came the answer, "dead. I inquired for him just before I started, of Mr. Rivington, to be told that he had died the week before. My informer said that, as the time wore on, he had become insane and continued so until death ended his misery. Other rumors connected his death with suicide."

"Then let his father think of him as dying of disease. I will tell him so, and you can confirm it." Poor old man, he too died many years ago, believing always that, through disease contracted in his Majesty's service, he had contributed his son to a lost cause.

But all this happened so long ago that it is hard for us to believe, after the years have brought peace, that any adverse conditions ever existed. As I have jotted down these principal events of our lives, we—for she, my Jeanne, though old and wrinkled now, has sat by my side, keeping the great-grandson amused, the one who interfered with me as I started this tale—have talked over the details, and often have been suspicious that perhaps we did not participate as I have stated, believing for the time that memory had played tricks, that phantom shapes and ideas, coming from so remote a past, had beguiled us. Then would we smile at our fears, for we knew these things were true.

When we are old, and the little ambitions of our youth have been fulfilled, our disappointments lost sight

of or swallowed up in the years through which we have passed, then can we afford to be magnanimous. But before the weight of years came upon us to mellow our prejudices did we then, as yet, deplore the sad ending of him who was our playmate.

THE END